

A BETTER PLAN TO SECURE SAFER COMMUNITIES

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FOREWORD

Britain succeeds, when working people succeed: that's the fundamental truth that runs throughout our plans for changing Britain.

People can only live flourishing lives if they know that they are safe and can live free from fear and intimidation.

But we know from talking to people in every corner of Britain that for millions of people, that's not the reality they see and feel. Too many communities are still being held back by antisocial behaviour, and too many people still have to cope with the consequences of serious or hidden crimes.

At a time when reports of child sexual exploitation and domestic violence are increasing, and when the threat from terrorism has increased, people have seen their local police service stripped back and crucial powers weakened. Yet the Conservatives want to go further still in the next five years, despite warnings from Chief Constables that the reductions in police officers being planned will lead to the end of neighbourhood policing all together.

Nobody wants a future in which people feel less safe because there are no neighbourhood police. Or where victims and witnesses stop reporting crimes because they no longer have faith in the criminal justice system to respond. Crime is changing, and whilst things like car crime have fallen, online crime is increasing fast with only a fraction reported to the police.

Britain deserves better and that's what this manifesto is about. It is a plan for a better future for our country.

It is a plan for strong neighbourhood policing, working proactively to prevent crime, rather than simply waiting until after it has occurred. A plan that puts victims first, with tough new laws to tackle domestic violence, sexual offences and child exploitation. A plan that puts victims and communities at the heart of the criminal justice system with the country's first ever Victims' Law. And a plan to face down the threat from extremism, with a robust security response and strategy to prevent our young people being drawn into hatred from the start.

Most of all, this is a plan for a future that draws on our great character as a country. Standing together rather than pulling apart. A future in which people can live free from fear and intimidation.

This plan is going to take real effort to bring about. But we believe it is worth it. We hope you will read this manifesto and then help to build this better future together.

Britain succeeds when people feel secure.

Ed Miliband *Yvette* *Sadiq*

Ed Miliband

Yvette Cooper

Sadiq Khan

Introduction

The first priority of the next Labour government will be to keep people safe.

Secure and strong communities are the bedrock of a free, prosperous and united country. But too many communities have felt abandoned in the face of crime and anti-social behaviour. The police are now increasingly stretched in fulfilling basic functions – like responses to 999 calls or keeping police on the streets. And as a result of the Conservatives' extreme cuts planned for the next Parliament, 'neighbourhood policing' – that crucial building block of British policing - is facing destruction. This is at a time when crime is changing and the police face new challenges and pressures from online, serious and organised crime, terrorism and the need to tackle hidden crimes such as child abuse, rape and domestic violence.

The British people expect criminal behaviour to be punished. But serious offenders are being let off the hook: rape, domestic violence and child abuse cases reported to the police have gone up, whilst the number of cases prosecuted has fallen. Reported child sexual exploitation offences have increased by 60%, yet the number of offenders being arrested has fallen.

Perpetrators of anti-social behaviour have been let off with a slap on the wrist. And victims – the people most affected by crime – are too often let down and ignored.

In recent years, the threat from Islamist extremism has increased. Hundreds of British citizens have joined Isis – a movement that is the enemy of freedom and has engaged in savage violence, and racial and religious hatred. But vital counter-terror powers have been weakened and programmes to prevent young people being drawn into hatred cut back. The British people have faced down terrorism before and will do so again. But they need to know their government will take the difficult and long term decisions required to keep us safe.

Labour will make different choices in order to keep bobbies on the beat. By abolishing Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), halving the cost of police governance, ending the subsidy for firearms licensing and mandating forces working closer together, we will secure the future of neighbourhood policing. Communities will have a greater say over local policing priorities and reforms will be put in place to raise professional standards and

ensure our police service is equipped to meet the challenges of the 21st Century.

We will restore faith in the criminal justice system, passing tough new laws to tackle violence against women and child sexual exploitation and reforming our prisons so that they are turned into places of hard work and learning. Instead of neglecting anti-social behaviour, we will require offenders to make good on the damage caused. And to ensure victims are at the heart of the criminal justice system, we will introduce the country's first ever Victims' Law.

Finally a Labour government will make sure the police and security agencies have the powers they need to respond to the threat from Islamist extremism. As well as a robust security response, we will do more to prevent young people being drawn into hatred to begin with, overhauling the 'Prevent' programme so that it involves Muslim communities in the fight to counter extremist ideology and strengthening the laws against hate crime.

Labour's better plan to build safer and stronger communities

- Protect neighbourhood policing – abolishing Police and Crime Commissioners, halving the cost of police governance, ending the subsidy

for firearms licensing and mandating police forces working together – to safeguard over 10,000 officers in the next three years. The Conservatives only have a plan to cut more police

- Prevent crime before it occurs, forcing perpetrators of anti-social behaviour to make good on the damage caused, diverting young adults away from crime and banning the sale of 'legal highs' on our high streets
- Bring in tough new laws to confront child sexual exploitation and violence against women, including powers to prevent an adult from contacting or communicating with a child if there is evidence of abuse and banning the use of so-called 'community resolutions' in instances of domestic violence
- Putting victims at the heart of the criminal justice system with the country's first ever Victims' Law and building a justice system fit for the 21st Century with prisons turned into places of hard work and learning
- A robust response to the extremist threat, with dangerous suspects subject to proper controls and an overhaul of the 'Prevent' programme to stop young people from being radicalised

1. Saving neighbourhood policing

Labour believes British policing is at its best when it is rooted in local communities, proactively preventing crime, rather than simply reacting to emergencies. Yet under this government, neighbourhood policing has been decimated and is at risk of disappearing for ever. For the first time in many years people have reported seeing fewer police officers in their communities. We know people consider neighbourhood policing to be part of the fabric of their community, yet they are seeing it disappear in front of their eyes.

The Government has allowed this to happen despite evidence that the police are already struggling to cope with changing patterns of crime. Whilst high volume crimes, like car crime, have continued their long term fall, online crime is through the roof and underreported. More complex crimes such as child abuse are increasing. More violent crime is being reported to the police, but fewer offenders are being brought to justice. Despite an increase in reported rape cases, fewer people are being arrested, prosecuted and convicted. Meanwhile non-crime pressures continue to pile on the police, dealing with too many mental health patients as support is withdrawn elsewhere.

Rather than making efforts to remedy these problems, the Conservatives' extreme plans for the next 5 years will mean losing even more police officers in the next Parliament than in this one, despite the warnings of many Chief Constables that this will mean the end of community policing as we know it.

Labour has a better plan to improve policing and ensure that forces have the resources they need to respond to these crimes.

By making different choices, we can protect neighbourhood policing. We won't take policing back decades like the Conservatives. We will abolish Police and Crime Commissioners, halve the cost of police governance, end the subsidy of firearms licensing, and mandate police forces to work closer together, to safeguard over 10,000 police officers for the next three years. This will be backed up by a new 'Local Policing Commitment', guaranteeing neighbourhood policing in every community.

Effective policing cannot operate in isolation: it needs to be locally accountable, working in partnership to keep people safe and preventing anti-social behaviour from taking place. So we will strengthen local community

safety partnerships, giving local people a voice in the hiring of local police commanders and a role in setting neighbourhood policing priorities. Force-level governance will be taken on by local government.

We will raise professional standards in policing. With Labour, all police officers will become Chartered Officers, holding a registration with the College of Policing and able to be struck off for serious misconduct – just as doctors and lawyers can be. We will ensure the police are equipped with the right skills, capabilities and technology to deal with emerging crime challenges, for example, working to recruit IT and economic graduates into policing, with a programme modelled on Teach First.

At its best, British policing is still the envy of the world. But when policing goes wrong it causes huge injustice, undermines confidence and casts a long shadow over the vital work officers do. So we will strengthen the system of investigation and inspection, replacing the weak and discredited IPCC with a new Police Standards Authority. We will reform the practice of Stop and Search, making it clear in law that stopping someone on the basis of the colour of their skin is illegal, discriminatory and

wrong. And we will work with the police to improve ethnic minority recruitment so that the police better reflect the communities they serve including legislating to ensure increased diversity.

Labour will:

- Protect neighbourhood policing and keep police on the beat through a plan that safeguards over 10,000 police officers over the next three years. The Conservatives only have a plan to cut more police
- Abolish Police and Crime Commissioners, halve the cost of police governance, stop the subsidy of firearms licensing and mandate police forces to work more closely together
- Strengthen local accountability by giving communities a say in the hiring of local police commanders and in setting neighbourhood policing priorities
- Raise police standards with a new Chartered Officer and a powerful new standards body
- Work with the police to improve ethnic minority recruitment

2. Preventing crime before it occurs

The next part of Labour's plan is preventing crime occurring in the first place. If anti-social behaviour is tolerated, rather than dealt with swiftly, it can spread and breed more serious crimes. If young offenders aren't identified and the problem gripped early enough, many of them will go on to become prolific and serial offenders, wasting their lives and damaging their local communities. If drug addiction isn't tackled, it can drive up crime and anti-social behaviour. And if crimes like domestic abuse are not confronted, the long-term effects can devastate families.

Labour will ensure anti-social behaviour is nipped in the bud, with offenders being made to put right the wrong they have done. Instead of low level cautions, which have no immediate consequences, police will be able to issue payback orders, requiring offenders to make good on the damage caused and pay back to their victims and their communities. We will ensure staff who work with the public get greater protection from attacks, with tougher penalties for criminals who assault workers.

The last Labour government's reforms of youth justice, which required agencies to

collaborate in preventing youth offending, have reduced both youth crime and the numbers of young people in prison. We will extend that model, by piloting a new approach to 18-20 year old offenders – incentivising local authorities, police and probation to work together to identify those at risk of drifting into criminal activity and, where possible, divert them into a more constructive way of life. We will work to embed restorative justice right across the youth justice system. And we will better coordinate activities across central and local government and its associated agencies to cut crime and re-offending amongst women.

We know drug and alcohol addiction continues to be a major cause of crime. We will ensure drug treatment services focus on the root causes of addiction, with proper integration between health, police and local authorities in the commissioning of treatment services. We will ban the sale and distribution of dangerous psychoactive substances, so-called 'legal highs' which have been responsible for a growing number of drug-related deaths. And we will take targeted action against the sale of low cost, high-strength alcoholic products, which fuels binge-drinking-related

disorder in some of our town centres. We will make sure that domestic violence is tackled and not ignored, helping to prevent the cycle of violence suffered by some children and families and wrecking too many lives.

Preventing crime means working internationally too. Because we know criminals often attempt to evade capture by crossing borders, we will strengthen the ability of our police to work with their counterparts in other countries, sharing information and utilising investigative powers, such as the European Arrest Warrant, to make sure criminals face justice. And we will take stronger action to protect victims of human trafficking, including by requiring international business supply chains to do more to stop slavery.

Labour will:

- Replace ineffective police cautions for anti-social behaviour and low level crime with payback orders, which require offenders to make good on the damage caused
- Pilot a new approach to young adult offenders, with agencies collaborating to divert them from a life of crime
- Ban the sale and distribution of dangerous psychoactive substances, so called 'legal highs'
- Take targeted action against the sale of low cost high strength alcohol



3. Tough new laws to confront child sexual abuse and violence against women

Across the country, everyone agrees that children should be protected, that abuse of our young people is immoral, that violence against women and girls must be confronted with robust laws and offenders properly punished. But there is still a terrible gap between what we all believe and the reality of the protection provided.

1 in 20 children in the UK have been sexually abused according to the NSPCC. Last year 18,600 children and young people contacted Childline to discuss child sex abuse. The number of child sexual exploitation offences reported to the police has increased by 60%, yet the number of offenders being arrested has fallen over the last four years. 13 per cent fewer child abuse cases are reaching the courtroom and convictions are down by 11 per cent.

We know violence against women and girls is still far too rife in our communities. Two women a week are killed by a current or former male partner. At least 750,000 children a year witness domestic violence.

Sexual offences have gone up and too many girls are still at risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Tackling these heinous crimes will be one of the next Labour government's biggest priorities.

Too often victims are not being heard or listened to.

We will set up a new child protection unit between the Home Office and Department for Education to provide leadership in government and drive the changes needed. We will bring in tough new powers enabling the police to prevent an adult from contacting or communicating with a child if there is evidence of abuse, and make it a criminal offence if they contact them. We will introduce mandatory reporting of abuse. We will ensure people convicted of sex offences are barred from working with children.

We will continue to support the Justice Lowell Goddard child abuse inquiry. We will work with survivors and Justice Goddard to strengthen it where necessary, including supporting the inclusion of allegations related to Northern Ireland. We will also strengthen the protection for children against grooming or exposure to online pornography.

We will publish the first UK-wide 'Violence against Women and Girls Bill', set up a Commissioner to enforce national minimum standards in preventing domestic and sexual violence and establish a National Refuge

Fund and continue to provide stability of central funding for Rape Crisis Centres.

We will strengthen the law to prevent violence against women and girls, banning the use of community resolutions as a response to domestic violence and tightening the gun licensing regime so that people with a history of domestic or sexual violence will not be given an unrestricted licence. We will make changes to DNA retention, so that rape suspects have their DNA recorded and stored. And we will consult on strengthening the law to prevent Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Victims of domestic violence need far better support. Too often they are unable to break free from abusive relationships because this Government's changes have deprived them of support for legal fees they need for divorce cases. It will be a priority for the next Labour Government to ensure victims of domestic violence get the legal support they need to break free of violent relationships.

And because we know all our children – boys and girls – need to understand the importance of equal and respectful relationships, we will introduce compulsory age-appropriate sex and relationships education in schools.

Labour will:

- Set up a new child protection unit to provide leadership in government to drive the changes needed.
- Introduce tough new powers enabling the police to prevent an adult from contacting or communicating with a child if there is evidence of abuse, and make it a criminal offence if they contact them.
- Introduce mandatory reporting and bar sex offenders from working with children.
- Introduce compulsory age-appropriate sex and relationships education in schools to teach respect in relationships.
- Ban the use of community resolutions in domestic violence cases
- Make changes to DNA retention, so that rape suspects have their DNA recorded and stored

4. A justice system that puts victims first

Our justice system relies on a fundamental principle: confidence. Victims and witnesses need to have confidence that when they report crimes, their case will be dealt with thoroughly and fairly. They need to know that when they give up their time, often under considerable duress, to come forward and give evidence, they will be treated with decency and that their concerns will be listened to, rather than ignored. And of course communities need confidence that those committing crimes will be caught, punished and put back on the right track.

That confidence is precious but it is also fragile – and it is being undermined by a justice system that continues to treat victims at best as an irrelevance, at worst as an inconvenience; by the growing evidence of chaos and decline in our prisons, with violence and suicides up and inmates increasingly able to smuggle in drugs and mobile phones; and by the reckless privatisation of probation, meaning dangerous offenders are more likely to be monitored by companies with no track record of success, putting public safety at risk.

Labour will restore confidence in criminal justice by putting victims first.

We will enact Britain's first Victims' Law – giving victims a voice and entitlements to minimum standards of service. We will take forward the recommendations of the Victims' Taskforce report by Sir Keir Starmer QC, Baroness Doreen Lawrence and Peter Neyroud, including the right to review cases when charges are not brought; a right to information so victims can be kept up to date with the details of their case, and the right to decency in the courtroom.

We need prisons that both punish and rehabilitate people. So we will make it a priority to increase the amount of time prisoners spend working and learning. Prisons will be measured by how successful they are in reforming prisoners and reducing their re-offending. We will strengthen the inspection regime by making it properly independent from government. We will end the merry go round of prison governors chopping and changing, weakening leadership in our jails. And we will also raise professional standards amongst prison officers, including through the creation of chartered prison officers, and confront the neglected problem of staff corruption.

Finally, we believe decisions on the supervision of dangerous offenders

should be determined by public safety, rather than profit. So we will make sure that companies providing probation services are subjected to appropriate levels of transparency and scrutiny.

Labour will:

- Enact Britain's first Victims' Law to put victims at the heart of the criminal justice system
- Reform prisons, by incentivising them to ensure prisoners spend more time working and learning
- Raise professional standards amongst prison officers, including by confronting the neglected problem of staff corruption
- Ensure companies providing probation services are subjected to appropriate levels of transparency and scrutiny so that public safety is always put first



5. Standing strong together against the threat from extremism

The threat from Islamist extremism is increasing. Hundreds of British citizens have joined Isis – a movement that has engaged in savage violence, and racial and religious hatred.

The British people have faced down terrorist threats before and will do so again, standing united together, rather than allowing ourselves to be divided.

With Labour, the security services will have the powers they need to disrupt and tackle terrorism. The Government were wrong to weaken counter terror powers by scrapping Control Orders. With Labour, dangerous suspects will be subject to proper controls. And we will work with our intelligence agencies to ensure the right resources are available to review and use these powers where required.

Every government department will be engaged in the work to fight terrorism. We will implement a much more rigorous strategy for dealing with people returning from the Syrian conflict. Alongside appropriate police action and prosecution, it will be mandatory for anyone returning from fighting in Syria to engage in a de-radicalisation programme designed to confront them with the consequences of their actions.

Our security and intelligence agencies need to be able to keep up with new technology to keep us safe, and oversight needs to keep up with new technology too. We will strengthen both the powers available and the safeguards that protect people's privacy. It is why Labour argued for an independent review, currently being undertaken by David Anderson. We will strengthen the oversight of our intelligence agencies and reform the existing Commissioners system to make sure the public can continue to have confidence in the vital work that they do to keep us safe.

Labour will take on extremism wherever it appears, introducing a tough and comprehensive counter-extremism strategy. To defeat the threats of Islamist terrorism we must also engage with the personal, cultural and wider factors that turn young people to extremism. The 'Prevent' programme was set up under the last Labour Government to stop young people becoming radicalised. But the Conservatives have cut the funding and narrowed its focus. Much of the work to engage Muslim communities has been lost. We will overhaul the programme to involve communities in countering extremist propaganda, stopping young people being groomed, and building

resilient institutions for social integration. It will be expanded into more local authority areas.

We applaud those faith communities who have pioneered inter-faith dialogue for the common good, and the National Citizens Service which brings together young people from all walks of life.

We will take a zero tolerance approach to hate crime, such as anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. A Labour Government will ensure hate crime is properly recorded, including incidents of Islamophobia. We will challenge prejudice before it grows, whether in schools, universities or on social media. And we will strengthen the law on homophobic, disability and transphobic hate crime.

Labour will:

- Protect the strong powers we need to control dangerous terror suspects
- Overhaul the 'Prevent' programme to tackle radicalisation, boosting support for community based work to counter extremist ideology and extending the number of local areas receiving support
- Ensure people returning from the Syrian conflict are properly dealt with: in addition to arrest and prosecution, people returning will be required to engage with de-radicalisation programmes to confront the consequences of their actions
- Make sure our investigative laws, powers and safeguards stay up-to-date with changing technology
- Drive forward a cross-government strategy to prevent hate crime, with action in schools, universities and social media

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