



Conservative Party Policy

Europe

The Conservative Party believes Britain's interests are best served by membership of a European Union that is an association of its Member States. A Conservative Government would never allow Britain to slide into a federal Europe.

The Conservative Party supports an open, flexible Europe, whose priorities should be what really matter to the peoples of Europe: global competitiveness, global poverty and global warming. A Conservative Government would be active and energetic in the EU, promoting Britain's interest and engaging in the shared challenges all European countries face.

So the Conservative Party has set out a series of measures to deal with the worst problems caused by the Treaty.

A Conservative Government would change the law so that never again would a government be able to agree to a Treaty that hands over areas of power from Britain to the EU without a referendum.

A Conservative Government would also introduce a new law, in the form of a United Kingdom Sovereignty Bill, to make it clear that ultimate authority stays in this country, in our Parliament.

Schools

Improving our schools system is the most important thing we can do to make opportunity more equal and to address our declining social mobility. Britain is slipping down the world league tables in Maths and English, and violence in the classroom is a serious problem. Truancy is at record levels, having risen by more than a third despite Labour spending over £1 billion to combat it. Standards are falling, and there is a growing gap between the richest and the poorest. We can't go on like this.

The reason we have fallen behind is that schools are controlled by politicians and bureaucrats with the wrong ideas. They have

undermined the power of teachers to keep order and devalued the curriculum and exam system.

A Conservative government will give many more children access to the kind of education that is currently only available to the well-off: safe classrooms, talented and specialist teachers, access to the best curriculum and exams, and smaller schools run by teachers who know the children's names

Crime & Justice

Violent offences have risen sharply under Labour, with knife and gun crime higher than in 1997. Yet police officers spend 50 per cent more time on paperwork than they do out on patrol. Labour's obsession with bureaucratic targets and box-ticking has hindered the fight against crime. They have launched endless initiatives and top-down schemes which have made little difference. The string of broken promises has undermined people's trust. We can't go on with the police filling in forms instead of fighting crime.

The criminal justice system is broken. We need to rebuild confidence in the system and convince people it is working to protect them. Nowhere is our approach of transparency, accountability and decentralization more important. Our aim is to restore responsibility and discretion to the police – getting them out of police stations and out onto the street fighting crime – while making them truly accountable to the people they serve. We will do that by giving people the power to elect an individual who will set the policing priorities for their community, and by providing detailed data about crime in their area. By giving people robust information and real power, they will be able to force the police to focus on the crime that affects their communities.



Health

Over three years ago David Cameron spelled out his priorities in three letters – NHS. Since then, we have consistently fought to protect the values the NHS stands for and have campaigned to defend the NHS from Labour's cuts and reorganisations.

As the party of the NHS, we will never change the idea at the heart of our NHS – that healthcare in this country is free at the point of use and available to everyone based on need, not ability to pay. Labour promised to save the NHS but today, despite the massive increase in spending, the gap in health outcomes between the UK and the rest of Europe has actually widened.

A decade of top-down, bureaucratic mismanagement has consistently undermined the professionalism and motivation of NHS staff and skewed NHS priorities away from patient care, creating a culture where ticking boxes is more important than giving patients the treatment they need. We can't go on with an NHS that puts targets before patients.

We understand the pressures the NHS faces. In recognition of its special place in our society, we are committed to protecting health spending in real terms – we will not make the sick pay for Labour's Debt Crisis. But that doesn't mean the NHS shouldn't change. When you're more likely to die of cancer in Britain than most other countries in Europe – and when the number of managers in the NHS is rising almost three times as fast as the number of nurses – the question isn't whether the NHS should change, it's how the NHS should change. We have a reform plan to make the changes the NHS needs.

Economy

We cannot go on with the old model of an economy built on debt. An irresponsible public spending boom, an overblown banking sector and unsustainable consumer borrowing on the back of a housing bubble were the features of an age of irresponsibility that left Britain so exposed to this economic crisis. They cannot be the sources of sustainable growth for

the future. Indeed, the lack of confidence in Britain's ability to pay its way now risks higher mortgage rates and a return to recession.

So the answer lies in building a new British economic model. Saving and business investment must replace debt as the foundation of prosperity. Our exports must grow. Jobs must be created in the private sector and we must get value for money from the public sector.

Under the next Conservative Government, our tax system, education and national infrastructure will help British firms out-compete others in the world, not hold them back. We will build a more balanced economy which does not depend so heavily on the success of financial services, and where all parts of the country share in the gains. The bedrock of this new model will be the stability and low mortgage rates that come from a credible plan to reduce our record budget deficit, protect Britain's credit rating and give taxpayers value for money.



**Your Conservative Party
Candidate Daniel Rees**

