

General Election 2024

Manifesto Mashup!

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Introduction

We're in the midst of the General Election campaign, with the big vote taking place on 4 July 2024. That means it's time for Manifesto Mashup!

We've sifted several hundred pages of policy proposals from the three parties most likely to form the next Westminster government or be the official opposition (Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat) and categorised the flurry of initiatives into key topics of interest to charities, voluntary groups, and social enterprises. We have included links to the manifestos of other parties competing in the election too, such as the Greens and Reform UK, but have not analysed these in detail (see Section 10, Further Context).

The categories and lists are not exhaustive. Mostly the points are taken verbatim from the manifesto documents, but sometimes we've paraphrased or edited for brevity. We have focused on and broken down mainly domestic policy proposals which affect large parts of the charity sector or specific subsectors, including policies on civil society and communities; climate change and the environment; children and young people; criminal justice, policing and prisons; equalities and human rights; housing and homelessness; immigration, refugees and asylum seekers; social care; and welfare, benefits and poverty.

If you're wondering: 'isn't there any more detail about this issue in there?' Generally there isn't. Some of the manifestos offer more policy detail (Liberal Democrats) whereas some are more high level (Labour). Individual policy initiatives typically lack much beyond a vague, top-level headline or promise which is set in some broader context (with some figures attached if they're really serious). Sometimes it's unclear what certain proposals even mean, or it seems likely they haven't been properly thought through at all. Despite this, getting a sense of what the parties are promising now, and how they differ from each other, could indicate what they might do in government should they come to power.

As you'll see from the analysis below, there's depressingly little specifically about charities, civil society, social enterprise, or volunteering in any of the manifestos. In places there are mentions in certain contexts, or acknowledgements that government will work in partnership with civil society, but details are scarce. Given the scale of the challenges our society faces and the importance of the many causes and issues listed above, whichever party eventually forms the next government needs to urgently address this gap and seriously engage with charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises to achieve positive change.

We hope you'll find this Mashup helpful!

1. Civil Society and Communities

Unlike in some previous elections, none of the main parties had published recent high-level civil society strategy papers before the election this time. There were few or no mentions of ‘civil society’, ‘charity’, ‘voluntary’, ‘volunteering’ or ‘social enterprise’. However, some related initiatives, particularly around community rights, funding streams and philanthropy, local government or devolving power, will be of interest to civil society organisations.

Conservative

- Introduce mandatory National Service, including “Civic Service” option; equivalent of one weekend a month (25 days a year) volunteering in the community, alongside work or study, for a year.
- Extend the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for three years at the next Spending Review, before using this funding to support UK wide National Service. Both schemes will involve funding community groups focused on increasing life chances, instilling civic pride and boosting people’s skills.
- Provide 105 towns in the UK with a £20 million endowment fund for local people to change their town’s future.
- Empower communities through devolution and new powers. By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal.
- Extend Community Ownership Fund for another three years to help more communities across the UK take control of vital community assets like pubs, music venues, libraries, green spaces, and leisure centres.
- Leverage philanthropy for good causes and cultural institutions; work with individuals, businesses, charities and other networks to find opportunities to unleash this even further.
- Complete the review of Gift Aid within the next Parliament.
- Grow opportunities for all types of providers - NHS, charity or independent sector - to offer services free of charge to NHS patients, where these meet NHS costs and standards.
- Return to spending 0.7% of GNI on international aid when fiscal circumstances allow. Assess every penny of this money with a strict national interest test.

Labour

- Work in partnership with business, trade unions, civil society, faith groups, and communities.
- Seek involvement from industry, trade unions, and civil society in plans for growth.
- Restore development spending to 0.7 per cent of gross national income as soon as fiscal circumstances allow.
- Deliver value for money by working with the Independent Commission for Aid Impact to apply high standards to aid spending.
- End the VAT exemption and business rates relief for private schools to invest in state schools [cutting tax reliefs for private schools, many of which are charities].
- Give local councils multi-year funding settlements and end wasteful competitive bidding.
- Widen devolution to more areas, encouraging local authorities to come together and take on new powers.
- Renew opportunities for the Prime Minister and Heads of Devolved Government to collaborate with each other.
- Establish a new Council of the Nations and Regions.
- Introduce a new statutory requirement for Local Growth Plans that cover towns and cities across the country, aligned with a national industrial strategy.

Liberal Democrat

- Tackle the funding crisis facing local authorities, including by providing multi-year settlements, boosting the supply of social housing, and forging a long-term, cross-party agreement on social care.
- End the top-down reorganisation of councils and the imposition of elected mayors on communities who do not want them.
- Decentralise decision-making from Whitehall and Westminster by inviting local areas to take control of the services that matter to them most
- Establish national and local citizens' assemblies to give people real involvement in the decisions needed to tackle climate change.
- Restore the UK's role as a global leader on climate change, by returning international development spending to 0.7% of national income, with tackling climate change a key priority for development spending.

2. Climate Change and the Environment

As with the 2019 manifestos, green policy is often interwoven across related policy areas such as transport, health, economic development, and foreign affairs. All three parties promise to take action on sewage spills and water quality, but some other environmental commitments seem to have been scaled down compared to 2019.

Conservative

- Ratify the Global Oceans Treaty early in the next Parliament.
- Ban executive bonuses if a water company has committed a serious criminal breach.
- Use fines from water companies to invest in river restoration projects.
- Reform the 'Price Review' regulatory process for water companies.
- Deliver tree planting and peatland commitments through Nature for Climate funding.
- Cut red tape that holds back the planting of trees in the planning system.
- Deliver the commitment at COP28 to introduce forest risk commodities legislation early in the next Parliament.
- Designate the 11th National Park alongside investing to improve existing National Parks and protected landscapes.
- Continue to work with landowners, charities and others to open up more 'access to nature' routes. We will not impose a universal Right to Roam.
- Continue to develop a UK-wide Deposit Return Scheme, while working to minimise the impact on businesses and consumers.
- Treble offshore wind capacity, to deliver low-cost, home-grown energy.
- Build the first two carbon capture and storage clusters, based across North Wales and, the North West of England and Teesside and the Humber.
- Invest £1.1 billion into the Green Industries Growth Accelerator to support British manufacturing capabilities.
- Approve two new fleets of Small Modular Reactors within the first 100 days of the next Parliament.
- Ensure that green levies on household bills are lower, and rule out creating further green levies.
- Fund an energy efficiency voucher scheme, open to every household in England, to support the installation of energy efficiency measures and solar panels.

Labour

- Work in partnership with civil society, communities and business to restore and protect our natural world.

- Make Britain a clean energy superpower, with a Green Prosperity Plan to invest in the industries of the future.
- Work with the private sector to double onshore wind, triple solar power, and quadruple offshore wind by 2030.
- Introduce a new Energy Independence Act, to establish the framework for Labour's energy and climate policies.
- Create a new publicly-owned company, Great British Energy, to drive forward investment in clean, home-grown energy production, capitalised with £8.3bn.
- Deploy more distributed energy production capacity through a Local Power Plan, partnering GB Energy with energy companies, local authorities and co-operatives.
- Create a Clean Power Alliance, to bring together a coalition of countries at the cutting edge of climate action.
- A National Wealth Fund that will invest £1bn to accelerate the deployment of carbon capture and £500m to support the manufacturing of green hydrogen.
- Restore the phase out date of 2030 for new cars with internal combustion engines.
- Invest £6.6bn over the next parliament to upgrade energy efficiency in five million homes.
- Establish three new National Forests in England, planting millions of trees and creating new woodlands.
- Expand nature-rich habitats such as wetlands, peat-bogs and forests.
- Put failing water companies in special measures to clean up our water.
- Give regulators new powers to block bonuses for water company executives, bring criminal charges against persistent law breakers, and impose severe fines.
- Work in partnership with civil society, communities and businesses to restore and protect our natural world.

Liberal Democrat

- Make homes warmer and cheaper to heat with a ten-year emergency upgrade programme, starting with free insulation and heat pumps for those on low incomes, and ensure that all new homes are zero-carbon.
- Drive a rooftop solar revolution by expanding incentives for households to install solar panels, including a guaranteed fair price for electricity sold back into the grid. 24 Liberal Democrat Election Manifesto 2024.
- Appoint a Chief Secretary for Sustainability in the Treasury to ensure that the economy is sustainable, resource-efficient and zero-carbon.
- Establish a new Net Zero Delivery Authority to coordinate action across government departments.
- Invest in renewable power so that 90% of the UK's electricity is generated from renewables by 2030.
- Establish national and local citizens' assemblies to give people real involvement in the decisions needed to tackle climate change.

- Restore the UK's role as a global leader on climate change, by returning international development spending to 0.7% of national income, with tackling climate change a key priority for development spending.
- Transform water companies into public benefit companies.
- Ban bonuses for water bosses until discharges and leaks.
- Replace Ofwat with a tough new regulator with new powers to prevent sewage dumps.
- Set meaningful and binding targets to stop the decline of our natural environment and 'double nature' by 2050: doubling the size of the Protected Area Network, doubling the area of most important wildlife habitats, doubling the abundance of species and doubling woodland cover by 2050.
- Plant at least 60 million trees a year, helping to restore woodland habitats, increase the use of sustainable wood in construction, and reach net zero.
- Pass a Clean Air Act, based on World Health Organization guidelines, enforced by a new Air Quality Agency.
- Strengthen the Office for Environmental Protection and provide more funding to the Environment Agency and Natural England to help protect our environment and enforce environmental laws

3. Children and Young People

There were some initiatives to assist children and young people in the three manifestos. However, given the impact of the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis on living standards and children's well-being, and the context of previous under-investment and austerity cuts to services for young people, many charities will have wanted to see more and stronger commitments, or very different proposals and priorities.

Conservative

- Introduce mandatory National Service for all school leavers at 18, with the choice between a competitive placement in the military or civic service roles.
- Establish a Royal Commission, the first in a quarter of a century, to design a modernised National Service. It will be backed by funding rising to £2.5 billion in the final year of the Parliament and a new National Service Act.
- Support the National Citizen Service to help young people build confidence and develop the skills they need to thrive.
- Deliver 60,000 more school places and a further 15 new free schools for children with special educational needs.
- From September 2025, all eligible parents with children from nine months old to when they start school will be able to access 30 hours of free childcare a week.
- Create 100,000 apprenticeships in England in every year of the next Parliament.

Labour

- Develop an ambitious strategy to reduce child poverty, working with the voluntary sector, faith organisations, trade unions, devolved and local government and communities.
- Fund free breakfast clubs in every primary school, accessible to all children.
- Provide access to specialist mental health professionals in every school.
- Bring in Young Futures Hubs for children and young people to drop-in for mental health support.
- Establish a youth guarantee of access to training, an apprenticeship, or support to find work for all 18–21 year-olds.
- Open an additional 3000 nurseries through upgrading space in primary schools.
- Work with local government to support children in care, including through kinship, foster care and adoption.
- Take a community-wide approach to meet the needs of children, including those with Special Educational Needs (SEND) and require all schools to co-operate with their local authority on school admissions, SEND inclusion and place planning.

Liberal Democrat

- Establish mental health hubs for young people in every community.
- Extend young people's mental health services up to the age of 25 to end the drop-off experienced by young people transitioning to adult services.
- Extend free school meals to all children in poverty, with an ambition to extend them to all primary school children when the public finances allow.
- Give parents genuine flexibility and choice in the crucial early months by doubling Statutory Maternity and Shared Parental Pay to £350 a week and introducing an extra use-it-or-lose-it month for fathers and partners, paid at 90% of earnings.

4. Criminal Justice, Policing and Prisons

Criminal justice, policing and prisons policy remained a key area in the 2024 manifestos, with all three parties making various commitments to change sentencing rules, provide offender education and rehabilitation, and support victims of crime – which are critical to many charities working in this field.

Conservative

- Recruit 8,000 more full-time, fully warranted police officers to ensure a new police officer for every neighbourhood.
- Build four new prisons, completing our programme of 20,000 new prison places by 2030.
- Toughen up community sentencing by increasing the use of community payback and electronic tagging, so criminals pay their debt to society and communities witness justice being served.
- Fund every police force to roll out Hotspot Policing.
- Introduce a 25-year prison term for domestic murders, regardless of whether a weapon is used.
- Make life imprisonment without parole mandatory for more of the most heinous murderers and require rapists and other serious sexual offenders to spend the whole of their sentences behind bars.
- Toughen sentences for knife crime, grooming gangs and assaults against retail workers
- Turn criminals away from the cycle of reoffending, investing in rehabilitative services such as drug treatment, education and employment.

Labour

- Introduce a new Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, restoring police patrols to town centres.
- Introduce new Respect Orders to ban persistent adult offenders from town centres.
- Create a new specific offence for assaults on shop workers.
- Refer every young person caught in possession of a knife to a Youth Offending Team, to receive a mandatory plan to prevent reoffending.
- Create a new Young Futures programme with a network of hubs, with youth workers and mental health support workers in every community.
- Halve violence against women and girls within a decade.
- Introduce domestic abuse experts in 999 control rooms and ensure there is a legal advocate in every police force area.
- Reduce reoffending by improving prisoners' access to purposeful activity; creating pre-release plans; linking with local employers and the voluntary sector to get ex-offenders into work.
- Support prisons to link up with local employers and the voluntary sector to get ex-offenders into work.

Liberal Democrat

- Break the cycle of reoffending by improving rehabilitation in prisons and on release, and strengthening the supervision of offenders in the community.
- Ensuring survivors of violence against women and girls are properly supported in the criminal justice process, including through mandatory training for police and prosecutors in understanding the impact of trauma on survivors.
- End the disproportionate use of Stop and Search.
- Require all police forces to adopt ambitious targets for improving the diversity of their workforce and make regular progress reports to Parliament.
- Embed domestic abuse specialists in every police force and 999 operator assistance centre to ensure that reports from survivors are handled effectively and sensitively.
- Address delays in domestic abuse referrals from the police to the CPS and subsequent decision making by the CPS, acknowledging the unique risk these delays can pose to women's safety.
- Adopt a public health approach to the epidemic of youth violence which identifies and treats risk factors, rather than just focusing on the symptoms.
- Improve and properly fund supervision of offenders in the community, with far greater coordination between the prison service, probation service providers, the voluntary and private sectors and local authorities, achieving savings in the high costs of reoffending.

5. Equalities and Human Rights

The Conservative manifesto often positions itself at odds with the pre-existing national and international legal framework around equalities and human rights, whereas both the Labour and Liberal Democrat manifestos want to safeguard or improve those frameworks. These initiatives could have a direct effect on many charity beneficiaries and charity employers.

Conservative

- Introduce controls on all 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' government initiatives and spending.
- Introduce primary legislation to clarify that the protected characteristic of sex in the Equality Act means biological sex.
- Legislate so that an individual can only have one sex in the eyes of the law in the United Kingdom.
- Pass legislation to ensure schools must follow government guidance for teachers on how best to support gender questioning students in schools and colleges.
- Complete the implementation of the Cass Review, protecting young people questioning their gender from ideologically driven care and ensuring that NHS

services follow evidence-based best practice.

- Legislate to permanently prevent the private prescription and supply of puberty blockers for gender dysphoria.
- Speed up the use and enforcement of powers to remove illegal traveller sites, while giving councils greater planning powers to prevent unauthorised development by travellers.
- Introduce further powers to ban face coverings, pyrotechnics and climbing on war memorials.
- Strengthen police powers to prevent protests or marches that pose a risk of serious disorder.
- Place a duty on the police and prosecutors to publish regular guidance on the statements, chants or symbols, for example, the swastika or the term 'jihad', that in the context of political protest may constitute an offence.
- £54 million for the Community Security Trust to give Jewish schools and synagogues the security measures they need and allocated additional funding to support schools and universities to understand, recognise and tackle antisemitism
- £117 million over four years for the Protective Security for Mosques scheme.

Labour

- Enact the socio-economic duty in the Equality Act 2010.
- Take action to reduce the gender pay gap, building on the legacy of Barbara Castle's Equal Pay Act.
- Introduce a landmark Race Equality Act, to enshrine in law the full right to equal pay for Black, Asian and other ethnic minority people.
- Introduce the right to equal pay for disabled people.
- Introduce disability and ethnicity pay gap reporting for large employers.
- Protect LGBT+ and disabled people by making all existing strands of hate crime an aggravated offence.
- Deliver a full trans-inclusive ban on conversion practices.
- Modernise, simplify and reform the gender recognition law to a new process.
- Set an explicit target to close the Black and Asian maternal mortality gap.

Liberal Democrat

- Champion the Human Rights Act and resist any attempts to weaken or repeal it.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive Race Equality Strategy to address deep inequalities, including in education, health, criminal justice and the economy.
- Make misogyny a hate crime and give police and prosecutors the resources and training they need to prevent and prosecute all hate crimes while supporting survivors.

- Ensuring sustainable funding for services to support survivors of domestic abuse, with a particular focus on community-based and specialist ‘by and for’ services.
- Give everyone a new right to flexible working and every disabled person the right to work from home if they want to, unless there are significant business reasons why it is not possible.
- Uphold the Equality Act 2010.
- Respect and defend the rights of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, including trans and non-binary people.
- Ban all forms of conversion therapies and practices.
- Scrap the anti-protest laws, restoring pre-existing protections for both peaceful assembly and public safety.

6. Housing and homelessness

Shortages of affordable housing and the increasing problem of homelessness and rough sleeping remain massive problems and are key issues for many charities. All three manifestos made commitments in this area, whilst offering different or even conflicting solutions.

Conservative

- Deliver 1.6 million well-designed homes in the right places while protecting our countryside.
- Boost the availability of affordable housing for local people in rural areas.
- Ensure rural exception sites support local people into home ownership.
- Create a dedicated taskforce in Homes England to deliver on the mission set out in their Rural Housing Statement to invest in regeneration and building high quality homes.
- Deliver a record number of homes each year on brownfield land in urban areas, by providing a fast-track route through the planning system for new homes on previously developed land in the 20 largest cities.
- Unlock new urban regeneration schemes, by creating locally-led urban development corporations.
- Renew the Affordable Homes Programme that will deliver homes of all tenures and focus on regenerating and improving housing estates.
- Launch a new and improved Help to Buy scheme to provide first-time buyers with an equity loan of up to 20% towards the cost of a new build home.
- Legislate for new ‘Local Connection’ and ‘UK Connection’ tests for social housing in England, to ensure this valuable but limited resource is allocated fairly.
- Implement a ‘three strikes and you’re out’ expectation of social housing landlords for anti-social behaviour.

- Pass a Renters Reform Bill that will deliver fairness in the rental market for landlords and renters alike.
- End rough sleeping and prevent people from ending up on the streets in the first place.
- Deliver our commitments under the Local Authority Housing Fund and review the quality of temporary accommodation.

Labour

- Develop a new cross-government strategy, working with Mayors and Councils across the country, to put Britain back on track to ending homelessness.
- Immediately abolish Section 21 'no fault' evictions, empower renters to challenge discrimination and rent increases, extend 'Awaab's Law' to the private sector.
- Build 1.5 million homes over the next parliament.
- Fast-track approval of urban brownfield sites for housing development.
- Prioritise the release of lower-quality green belt land for housing development.
- Build a new generation of new towns in partnership with local leaders and communities.
- Deliver the biggest increase in social and affordable housebuilding in a generation.
- Change the Affordable Homes Programme to ensure it delivers more homes from existing funding.
- Support councils and housing associations to build their capacity and make a greater contribution to affordable housing supply.
- Prioritise the building of new social rented homes and increase protections on newly-built social housing.
- Introduce a permanent, comprehensive mortgage guarantee scheme to support first-time buyers.

Liberal Democrat

- Increase building of new homes to 380,000 a year across the UK, including 150,000 social homes a year, through new garden cities and community-led development of cities and towns.
- Deliver a fair deal for renters by immediately banning no-fault evictions, making three-year tenancies the default, and creating a national register of licensed landlords.
- Give local authorities, including National Park Authorities, the powers to end Right to Buy in their areas.
- Abolish residential leaseholds and capping ground rents to a nominal fee, so that

everyone has control over their property.

- End rough sleeping within the next Parliament and immediately scrap the archaic Vagrancy Act.
- Urgently publish a cross-Whitehall plan to end all forms of homelessness.
- Exempt groups of homeless people, and those at risk of homelessness, from the Shared Accommodation Rate.
- Introduce a 'somewhere safe to stay' legal duty to ensure that everyone who is at risk of sleeping rough is provided with emergency accommodation and an assessment of their needs.
- Ensure sufficient financial resources for local authorities to deliver the Homelessness Reduction Act and provide accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse.

7. Immigration, Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Debates about immigration, refugees and asylum seekers have been white hot over recent years with many charities and their beneficiaries caught in the cross-fire. All three parties offer different and even directly conflicting policies to address the issue in their manifestos.

Conservative

- Remove illegal migrants to Rwanda with a regular rhythm of flights every month.
- Bring the Illegal Migration Act into force and clear the asylum backlog, with all claims processed in six months and the use of hotels ended.
- Reform international laws to make them fit for an age of mass migration.
- Restrict visa access from countries that don't work with us on our national priorities, like illegal migration.
- Require migrants to undergo a health check in advance of travel; increase their Immigration Health Surcharge or require them to buy health insurance if they are likely to be a burden on the NHS.
- Increase all visa fees and remove the student discount to the Immigration Health Surcharge to raise more money for public services.

Labour

- Create a new Border Security Command to work internationally and pursue, disrupt and arrest human traffickers.
- Scrap the Rwanda scheme; set up a new returns and enforcement unit to fast-track removals to safe countries for people who do not have the right to stay in

the UK.

- Address humanitarian crises which lead people to flee their homes, and strengthen support for refugees in their home region.
- Reform the points-based immigration system, with appropriate restrictions on visas and by linking immigration and skills policy.
- Strengthen the Migration Advisory Committee, and establish a framework for joint working with skills bodies across the UK.

Liberal Democrat

- Scrap the Illegal Migration Act and the Rwanda scheme, uphold the Refugee Convention, and provide safe and legal routes to sanctuary for refugees, helping to prevent dangerous Channel crossings.
- Tackle the asylum backlog by establishing a dedicated unit to improve the speed and quality of asylum decision-making, introducing a service standard of three months for all but the most complex asylum claims to be processed, and speeding up returns of those without a right to stay.
- Lift the ban on asylum seekers working if they have been waiting for a decision for more than three months, enabling them to support themselves, integrate in their communities and contribute to the economy.

8. Social Care

The crisis in Social Care is long-standing priority for the public and many charities, which politicians from across the spectrum have failed to adequately respond to for years. This will be a vastly expensive but increasingly urgent problem to fix, and details in the manifestos are vague. Solutions to this complex issue may require cross-party support to progress.

Conservative

- At the next Spending Review, give local authorities a multi-year funding settlement to support social care.
- Take forward the reforms in the 'People at the Heart of Care' White Paper.
- Implement reforms to cap social care costs from October 2025.
- Create more places in children's homes while prioritising keeping families together where that's best for the child through the Kinship Care Strategy.

Labour

- Undertake a programme of reform to create a National Care Service, underpinned by national standards, delivering consistency of care across the country.

Liberal Democrat

- Establish a cross-party commission to forge a long-term agreement on sustainable funding for social care.
- Trial personal health and social care budgets so that individuals are in control of what care they receive.
- Roll out digital platforms for care users to develop networks, relationships and opportunities, connecting with care workers, friends and family, and voluntary groups.
- End the postcode lottery of service provision and provide national, high-quality care for everyone who needs it.
- Creating a National Care Agency to set national minimum standards of care.
- Give unpaid carers a fair deal by: Increasing Carer's Allowance and expanding eligibility; introducing a statutory guarantee of regular respite breaks for unpaid carers; introducing paid carer's leave.

9. Welfare, Benefits and Poverty

The decade of austerity has had a negative impact on the lives of people who rely on various social benefits, and are served in different ways by many charities. Reform or expansion of Universal Credit continues to feature in all three manifestos, over a decade since it was first introduced. See also initiatives under 'Equalities and Human Rights' above.

Conservative

- Save £12bn on welfare by: improving PIP assessments to provide a more objective consideration of people's needs; accelerating the rollout of Universal Credit; overhauling the fit note process so that people are not being signed off sick as a default; introducing tougher sanctions rules so people who refuse to take up suitable jobs after 12 months on benefits.
- Maintain all current pensioner benefits, including free bus passes, Winter Fuel Payments, free prescriptions and TV licences.
- Continuing to uprate the State Pension in line with the highest of prices, earnings or 2.5%.
- Ensuring that from next year the tax-free personal allowance for pensioners also rises by the highest of prices, earnings or 2.5%, guaranteeing that the new State Pension is always below the tax-free threshold.

Labour

- Review Universal Credit so that it makes work pay and tackles poverty.
- End mass dependence on emergency food parcels.
- Develop an ambitious strategy to reduce child poverty.
- Introduce free breakfast clubs in every primary school, protect renters from arbitrary eviction, slash fuel poverty.
- Work with local areas to create plans to support more disabled people and those with health conditions into work.
- Reform or replace the Work Capability Assessment, alongside a proper plan to support disabled people into work.
- Deliver a New Deal for Working People within 100 days, consulting fully with businesses, workers, and civil society on how to put our plans into place before legislation is passed.
- Ban exploitative zero hours contracts, end fire and rehire, and introduce basic rights from day one to parental leave, sick pay and protection from unfair dismissal.
- Retain the triple lock for the state pension.

Liberal Democrat

- Tackle child poverty by removing the two-child limit and the benefit cap.
- Set a target of ending deep poverty within a decade, and establish an independent commission to recommend further annual increases in Universal Credit to ensure that support covers life's essentials, such as food and bills.
- Support pensioners by protecting the triple lock so that pensions always rise in line with inflation, wages or 2.5% – whichever is highest.
- Scrap the bedroom tax.
- Replace the benefits sanctions regime with an incentive-based scheme to help people into work.
- Make the benefits system work better for disabled people by: Bringing Work Capability Assessments in-house; reforming Personal Independence Payment assessments to make the process more transparent and stop unnecessary reassessments.

10. Further context

Most of the parties focus their headline policy promises on issues they know are important to voters, such as reducing NHS waiting lists, hiring more doctors, nurses, teachers and police, or building more houses. They offer various figures and costings to support their claims. These are very important but governments often fail to deliver on these commitments when in power regardless of the party. For the most part we haven't analysed them here because they will be the subject of much public debate anyway.

There's also varying information in the different manifestos about taxes and spending, and the campaign is already being dominated by claims and counter-claims about whose fiscal policy or spending plans are more or less robust. We haven't examined or compared these questions because there are others with more expertise in economic forecasting and analysis of fiscal policy, such as [the Institute of Fiscal Studies, providing rigorous analyses](#).

These analysts have essentially said that none of the parties are telling the full truth about what's coming next. Because of the pandemic, demographic change, and sluggish economic growth, the tax burden and level of government debt is high, and many public services need investment after years of austerity. Whichever party forms the next government will have to make [big decisions on tax and spending](#) that they don't necessarily want to tell voters about now. They may wind up breaking or bending manifesto commitments not to raise taxes, or just be keeping quiet on what they really plan to do if they win.

Of the three manifestos analysed above, the Labour one is the most top level. Unlike its 2019 manifesto, which was very detailed, it combines a more limited number of 'missions' and 'steps' underpinned with more actions woven into the narrative and glossy pictures. As the governing party with a long track record to defend, the Conservative manifesto often refers to previous legislation or following through on pre-existing policies and initiatives.

The Liberal Democrat manifesto overall contains the most detail and usually the most specific proposals. Much of it is similar to their 2019 manifesto. These characteristics are reflected in the relative number of points in each of the categories shown in the analysis above. In some policy areas, some parties provided much more detail than others.

It's important to note that other parties not analysed in detail here, such as the [Scottish Nationalist Party](#) (SNP), [Plaid Cymru](#) (the Party of Wales), [Reform UK](#) and the [Green Party](#), also have manifestos, and their election results and policy proposals will likely have some impact on the next Parliament, by winning seats in certain areas or having an influence on which of the 'main' parties analysed above win seats. In the case of the nationalist parties in Scotland and Wales, their platforms could strongly affect how policy evolves in those areas, especially as elections for the devolved governments take place in a few years' time. The policies of these parties could also eventually find their way into the policy platforms of the three analysed above if they manage to make a splash with the public and are thus 'stolen' by one or more of the 'main' parties when in government.

Links to Manifestos

Conservative Party Manifesto:

[Clear Plan. Bold Action. Secure Future.](#)

Labour Party Manifesto:

[Change.](#)

Liberal Democrat Party Manifesto:

[For a Fair Deal.](#)

Green Party Manifesto:

[Real Hope. Real Change.](#)

Reform UK 'Contract':

[Our contract with you](#)

Scottish National Party Manifesto:

[A future made in Scotland.](#)

Plaid Cymru (the Party of Wales) Manifesto:

[For fairness, for ambition, for Wales.](#)