



The 2024 Social Contract

This is a new social contract fit for a modern democracy in the twenty-first century. It reimagines the relationship between citizens and the British state.

Every nation needs a shared moral and ethical framework to guide conduct and help design the necessary governance structures. ALL believes this should be based on equality, fairness, community, foresight, and resilience.

We acknowledge that being a citizen of a democratic nation includes the exchange of freedom for the benefits of being a citizen. At the most basic, we accept the exchange of the levying of taxes to defend the realm against enemies and provide public services. But being a modern citizen implies more than that alone.

We present this document to the nation, inviting the broadest participation in a debate about reshaping our country around trust and forging a consensus on the role of a new British State. Your voice matters in this process.

Constitutional Contract

The British State must embrace a redefined citizenship status, moving away from the ambiguities of 'subjects of the realm' and 'settled status' grades. Citizenship supersedes the hierarchy, which commences with the Royal Prerogative, to establish a society founded on rights and equality, with a more representative democracy and deliberative processes working to restore trust in the United Kingdom.

Equality is the founding value. The people are sovereign, the ultimate authority through a democratically elected Parliament. Every level of government, from Parliament, including the monarch, then derives its authority as citizens' representatives.

The exchange we make when governed in a representative democracy is that it fully represents us. We must have a political structure that represents the people's views and is not mitigated by parties alone.

Britain must have a new political mandate that ensures governance goes beyond the narrow perspective of the "ruling" political party but recognises the full spectrum of the people's views and needs based on genuine service. This will be articulated in a new legal **Duty of Governance**.

Britain needs a new **Codified Constitution** that spells out the relationship between the home nations and the state's many layers. Articulation will improve citizens' understanding of how the government works and communicate its obligations to all.

A Constitution for Citizens

A new Constitutional settlement is needed. We should discuss **codifying the Monarch's role** to become the nation's figurehead, not as Head of State. The monarch could instead represent the country without political power, with a role to support consensus and national identity amongst citizens.

That change would replace the historic hierarchy, with the crown having 'subjects' and elected governments 'representing the Crown in parliament.' Instead, Parliament becomes the core of the British State, with the Executive deriving its authority from a public mandate.

All public servants would then swear their allegiance to the Constitution, upholding the rule of law and protecting citizens, instead of their current allegiance to the individual monarch.

The **nature of the Union** will also be clarified based on clear principles of self-determination and equality, thereby addressing the power imbalance between the home nations, their Parliaments, and the central functions of the State. The role of the central British State institutions must be explained. Depending on the home nations' attitude toward independence, an English-only representative level may be required.

Meeting the needs of citizens will be at the heart of all governance. This includes adopting proportional representation based on all votes cast. There must also be provisions for checks and balances against Executive Power and clarity on the crucial role of the courts, particularly the **Supreme Court**, in upholding the rule of law, both nationally and in our international relations.

The roles of both Houses of Parliament, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, political parties, MPs, the devolved nations, and regional and local governments will be identified clearly.

The role of the second chamber, currently the **House of Lords**, needs clarification and formalisation. Rules for the promotion, vetting, appointment, and behaviour of peers need attention. Rules on the validity of Peers' amendments and the right to veto any bill not in any manifesto or coalition agreement need to be debated and formalised. This reform requires a national conversation on the form of change.

We suggest the **Prime Minister** can no longer take the country into war without two-thirds of Parliamentary support. Any laws presented which are not in the elected government's Manifesto or Coalition Agreement also require a two-thirds majority in both Houses of Parliament. No party should have the right to permanently remove a Prime Minister without returning to the nation for a new General Election. Power must be exercised to allow for change when circumstances occur.

A mandatory electoral cycle of five years is not a mandate for unlimited action without consultation. Where the national Parliament cannot resolve complex political challenges, these will be debated by a series of National **Citizen Assemblies** (CAs) to indicate the national consensus to Parliament. Improving citizens' involvement requires enhanced communication systems and rolling CAs to support decision-making, which will be mandated for all ministries and public bodies. These CAs will give their views on remit and strategy questions.

Democratic Representatives

Representatives are public servants. Transparency and accountability should be commitments given by anyone standing for public office. An oath on taking office will commit all to support **the Nolan**

Principles and work in the interests of citizens. On appointment, all MPs and Ministers must engage in introduction training to provide a basic understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Elected Representatives should meet minimum disclosure, verification, and financial evaluation standards. Any additional paid work, unless to maintain professional registrations, should not be acceptable for MPs and anyone holding office in government to avoid conflicts of interest.

Once elected, any MP should disclose their commercial interests and be handed over to independent custodians for their period of office. Parliament-appointed custodians will then directly manage blind trusts.

Compliance will be the responsibility of a new **independent Office of Governance** run by Parliament, incorporating the work of the current Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority. This will incorporate the work of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority and all the other audit and regulatory bodies involved in different compliance roles.

Each constituency will also have a new **Local Parliamentary Office** (LPO) to bring representation to every part of the country. The central state would pay for this to support the work of the local MP. It will monitor the security, well-being, and health of the chosen representative and the support staff to ensure adequate support is available.

MPs' expenses will, therefore, be more limited in scope and claims processes by the LPO and audited by the Office of Governance. The local LPO will provide a point of contact for citizens, and a case logging system will be deployed to ensure records of interactions are kept. Where enquiries are inappropriate, they will be redirected to the correct place.

Representatives may be members of political parties or independents. If party members, constituents' interests are more important than their party loyalty. Where policies that have not been part of any party manifesto or personal election commitment are pursued, the representative is bound to engage with a **Local Citizens' Assembly** (LCA) to hear their views. Where speed is necessary, this can be done through an online consultation. The LPO will manage this LCA facility. The results of all consultations will be publicly available.

Citizen Rights and Responsibilities

As citizens, we have rights and responsibilities that enable us to live in a free society. The expression of those full rights will be enshrined in a new **Citizens' Rights Bill**. Confirming all rights from treaties and other obligations the UK government has agreed to, including the ECHR. It will integrate the complex **human, environmental, social, and economic rights** we have accrued over many years through participation in international bodies and treaties.

Citizen Participation

Citizens must be registered to vote under an **Automatic Voter Registration** system linked to birth registration, National Insurance, tax submission, passport, driving licence, NHS and benefit payment records. Failure to provide up-to-date address information will result in penalties.

Citizens will respect and give their chosen representatives consideration. Threatening and abusive behaviour will be punishable by Public Order offences. In exchange, the representative has a duty of candour to respect, engage with and interact with citizens.

To be a citizen means more than simply voting sporadically. It requires attention to the nature of our representation and to have views on the policy options before the country. It should be a **Legal Duty To Vote**, and for those unable to support any candidate, a **'None of the Above' Option** will be available on any ballot.

Participation in deliberative systems like **Citizens' Assemblies** using selection by sortition will encourage the broadest possible range of citizens and support provision.

Political Education on how to participate in democracy and understand the way the British State is organised should be available to all citizens via online information and be part of the education curriculum at the secondary level. (Students should participate in voting procedures internally to give them experience and confidence in debating and voting decisions.)

The Economic Contract

The role of the government is to create a stable society and gather the funds to develop the systems necessary for citizens to prosper and contribute to society. This requires an economy that creates sufficient value to fund the state's ability to manage the non-monetized goods and services that a civilised society depends upon, such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, social welfare, and pensions. It should be based on fair relationships between capital, owners, workers, and customers.

Duty of Financial Candour: For the state to prosper, citizens agree to pay taxes and disclose their financial situation honestly. Holding funds in overseas tax havens must become socially unacceptable. All businesses in this country must disclose the nature of their ownership and pay taxes regardless of their owner's residency. All land and property holdings must be registered by identifiable natural persons in the relevant UK authority. The obligations and disclosures from companies will be identified by statute. Protection of citizens' financial assets and employment rights confers responsibilities on businesses and institutions. Businesses based in the country must disclose the nature of their ownership and pay taxes regardless of their owner's residency. Tax avoidance by individual directors or companies will be dealt with by penalties. The obligations and disclosures from companies will be identified by statute.

Environmental Contract

The country's natural capital is held in trust for all and future generations. There will be a new **Duty of Care** on all citizens, businesses, and institutions to protect the environment and pass it on to the next generations in as good or better condition. The UK and devolved nations must create and report on the **National Capital Registers and use Impact Accounting**. Local Authority scale versions of this data must be available to citizens on demand.

There will be a new **Right To A Clean Environment**, which clarifies what environmental harm levels are unacceptable. Penalties for pollution will reflect the seriousness of the offence. State support in the form of tax incentives or other payments will support the necessary personal and corporate investments in achieving our climate change and biodiversity loss mitigation objectives.

The implementation of achieving the nations' **Net Zero commitments** must be the responsibility of all levels of government.

The UK will support international efforts to agree on the crime of **ecocide** for those destroying the global commons.

Social Equality

Everyone in the country is a valued member of society, has inherent dignity, and must be respected. Those who are weakest will be offered protection and support. We will help all reach their maximum potential with appropriate health, social care, training, and educational support.

All government policy preparatory papers will include a **Social Cohesion Assessment** element to monitor policy changes' impacts on all community sections. These will be released before any new legislation is passed. There will be national indicators of social cohesion in the new **Cohesion Performance Review** process.

Citizens need access to essential services to participate in broader society – such as access to the internet and communications, allowing us to be full citizens.

Citizens Income System

The state will levy taxes fairly, considering the amount of tax the individual can reasonably pay relative to their income and means. It will ensure that all citizens have a minimum standard of living or income set out in a **Citizens' Income System**. Over time, this will replace the current complex benefits system and ensure that citizens can meet their basic needs with dignity from childhood to old age.

In exchange, Citizens will be encouraged to contribute to and be part of broader society through paid work, unpaid volunteering, care services, education or training, or creative work. The operation of the state will be structured to facilitate everyone's contribution to making this country a vibrant and exciting place to live.

Public Services Contract

Citizens have the right to have their needs met promptly. All public services should have **Minimum Service Agreements** – for example, it must be defined how long it is acceptable to wait for an ambulance, GP appointment, or routine surgery. For this to work, those in public service must report their situation publicly, tell you the truth (there will be a formal **Duty of Candour**) and to provide all citizens with information in a timely and understandable manner (**Public Reporting and Freedom of Information**).

If this is not possible for whatever reason, you should have a means of logging in a **Complaints System** and that to be dealt with respectfully. When things go wrong, then accountability is required, and apologies or mitigation is mandatory. Every organisation must have a visible complaints procedure in place.

Where mistakes have been made, the monitoring of corrective action is to be handled by a new **National Services Ombudsman**, who has the statutory powers to force disclosure and provide compensation where appropriate.

The Inter-generational Contract

For society to work cohesively, all generations must feel they have a stake in the future, from the old caring about their grandchildren to the young caring about their grandparents. When that joint commitment breaks down, we all lose.

Society is increasingly complex and expensive for citizens. Unless the nation creates relevant education and training, followed by secure, well-paid employment, some citizens will not be able to

meet their full potential. Fewer options, such as social housing, are available, so more people rent for longer. **New housing provisions, tenure and rent control** are needed to reflect the increase in renting as a lifetime practice and improve tenants' security.

For harmony between the generations, choices need to be made about resources. People need to take responsibility for their pension provision by saving from an earlier age to avoid burdening future generations. The contributions taken from workers will be managed to ensure a **National Wealth Fund** can pay for future pensions.

More affluent older people, who can transfer assets to their children and grandchildren, must be encouraged to do so earlier when it makes the most significant difference to younger generations. **Social Gifting Arrangements** will allow wealthier people to transfer wealth to other generations and invest in social bonds dedicated to social housing provision.

For those who do not have the option of inherited wealth, wider society needs to provide more support options. Building more **social housing**, assisted savings schemes, and enhanced tax credits for student loan repayments will allow younger people to work towards independent living and, eventually, the security of a permanent home.

For those with extreme wealth, **fairer taxation for passive income** will address their need to contribute more to society than other citizens. The country must collaborate with our international colleagues to address extreme global inequality.

To create a modern, cohesive nation means a country where every citizen is respected, valued, and can participate. Building that nation requires clarity on our shared values and assumptions about the structure of every layer of government and how they operate to work solely in the national interest.

This document is our contribution to the national debate on our democracy that Britain urgently needs to hold.

All of us together, as active Citizens.

The ALL Council
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