WHAT THE MANIFESTOS SAY
2019

BREXIT, DEVOLUTION AND CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM
This document sets out the key commitments on Brexit, devolution and constitutional reform in the 2019 Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green Party and Brexit Party national manifests.
Brexit

CONSERVATIVES

- Putting our [Withdrawal Agreement] deal through Parliament before Christmas and [...] leave the European Union in January. (p.5)
- There will be no political alignment with the EU. (p.5)
- Keep the UK out of the single market, out of any form of customs union, and end the role of the European Court of Justice. (p.5)
- Will not extend the implementation period beyond December 2020. In parallel, legislate to ensure high standards of workers’ rights, environmental protection and consumer rights. (p.5)
- Treat EU and non-EU citizens equally. (p.21)
- The UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be used to bind together the whole of the United Kingdom, tackling inequality and deprivation in each of our four nations. It will replace the [...] EU Structural Funds. (p.44)

LABOUR

- Rules out a no-deal Brexit (p.89)
- Secure a new Brexit deal – one that protects jobs, rights and the environment, avoids a hard border in Northern Ireland and protects the Good Friday Agreement and the peace process. Ensure that there is no change in the status or sovereignty of Gibraltar. (p.90)
- Put [the New Deal] to a legally binding referendum alongside the option of remaining in the EU. This will take place within the first six months of a Labour government. (p.90)

[The new deal] will include:
- A permanent and comprehensive UK-wide customs union.
- Close alignment with the Single Market.
- Dynamic alignment on workers’ rights, consumer rights and environmental protections so that UK standards keep pace across Europe as a minimum.
- Continued participation in EU agencies and funding programmes, including in such vital areas of co-operation as the environment, scientific research and culture.
- Clear commitments on future security arrangements, including access to the European Arrest Warrant and shared databases, making people safer at home and abroad. Labour will secure a revised Withdrawal Agreement that provides legal protection for citizens’ rights, meets our international obligations – particularly with regard to the Good Friday Agreement – and ensures an appropriate transition period to allow businesses and citizens to adapt to any new arrangements. (p.90)
- Secure robust and legally binding protections for workers’ rights, consumer standards and environmental protections, and ensure level-playing field protections are maintained. (p.90)
- Introduce a Withdrawal Agreement and Referendum Bill, providing the legal basis to conduct and implement the outcome of the referendum. (p.91)
• End the uncertainty created by the EU Settlement Scheme by granting EU nationals the automatic right to continue living and working in the UK. This new declaratory system will allow EU nationals the chance to register for proof of status if they wish, but will mean they no longer have to apply to continue living and working in this country. (p.91)

• If we remain in the EU, freedom of movement would continue. If we leave, it will be subject to negotiations, but we recognise the social and economic benefits that free movement has brought both in terms of EU citizens here and UK citizens abroad – and we will seek to protect those rights. (p.71)

• In accordance with our values and domestic laws, [...] will uphold the right to a family life for British, EU and non-EU residents alike. [...] end the deportation of family members of people entitled to be here and end the minimum income requirements which separate families. (p.71)

• Guarantee the full rights of EU citizens and their families living in the UK, including the right to automatic settled status and ensure there is no rolling back of the rights and protections enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. (p.29)

• Further rebalance power within the EU in favour of citizens and national self-determination, and away from corporate dominance. We believe this will lead to a renewed focus on the EU’s potential to deliver effective solutions to poverty, inequality and climate chaos – and help secure a long-term, positive future for the UK in the EU. (p.30)

• Enshrine Freedom of Movement as a core principle of the EU – enabling people to freely live, learn and love without borders. (p.31)

• Support the introduction of an EU-wide carbon tariff on countries that are not reducing their carbon emissions, to further encourage global action on the Climate Emergency. (p.32)

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

• Revoke Article 50 and stay in the EU. (p.11)

• In other circumstances, continue to fight for a people’s vote with the option to stay in the EU. (p.11)

• By stopping Brexit [...] protect and maintain freedom of movement, safeguarding the rights of UK citizens living elsewhere in the EU and EU citizens in the UK. (p.14)

GREENS

• An immediate final say on the terms of any Brexit deal, through a People’s Vote, with Remain as an option on the ballot paper. (p.29)

BREXIT PARTY

• Leave the European Union. (p.3)

• A clean-Brexit [with] no extended ‘transition period’. (p.5)

• Maintain subsidies and grants paid by the EU to UK businesses such as farmers, fisheries, universities and research bodies. (p.14)

• Reduce annual immigration and address wage stagnation and the skills gap by introducing a fair points system. And always provide a humane welcome for genuine refugees. (p.14)
Devolution

**CONSERVATIVES**

- Publish an English Devolution White Paper setting out our plans next year. (p.29)
- [L]evelling up every part of the UK – not just investing in our great towns and cities, as well as rural and coastal areas, but giving them far more control of how that investment is made. (p.26)
- [The] ambition is for full devolution across England, building on the successful devolution of powers to city region mayors, Police and Crime Commissioners and others. (p.29)
- Through bodies like the Northern Powerhouse, Western Gateway and Midlands Engine drive greater levels of foreign investment into the UK, promoting our towns, cities and counties around the world. As part of plans for full devolution […] invite proposals from local areas for similar growth bodies across the rest of England, such as the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. (p.29)
- [The] new Towns Fund will go to an initial 100 towns to improve their local economy – and they and only they will make the choice about what improvements their local area needs. (p.26)
- Give city regions the funding to upgrade their bus, tram and train services to make them as good as London’s, with more frequent, better-integrated services, more electrification, modern buses and trains and smart ticketing. (p.27)
- End the complicated franchising model and create a simpler, more effective rail system, including giving metro mayors control over services in their areas. (p.27)
- Carefully consider the recommendations of Lord Dunlop’s Independent Review into UK Government Union capability when it is published. (p.44)

**LABOUR**

- Decentralise decision-making and strengthen local democracy. (p.82)
- Bring about a radical decentralisation of power in Britain so that local people and communities are given far greater control over their own lives and prospects. (p.14)
- Re-establish regional Government Offices to make central government more attuned to our English regions, to support our regional investments, and to enable the shift of political power away from Westminster. (p.82)
- Shift the political centre of gravity by placing the National Transformation Fund Unit, a key part of the Treasury, in the North of England and build up the regional offices of government in each of the nine English regions to co-ordinate government policies at the regional level, as well as ensuring a regional voice in Whitehall. (p.14)
• Make sure that investment is spread evenly across the whole country and give powers and funding to every region and nation of the UK. (p.14)

• A Local Transformation Fund in each English region will be used exclusively to fund infrastructure projects decided at a local level, as will devolved governments in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. (p.14)

• Our Regional Development Banks will be governed by boards made up of key local stakeholders such as local chambers of commerce, trade unions and councillors – with Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland empowered to make similar arrangements. They will set priorities for lending, giving every region and nation a new and powerful lever to rebuild their economy on their own terms. (p.14)

• Reiterate our commitment to One Yorkshire, and make directly elected mayors more accountable to local councillors and elected representatives. (p.82)

• Ensure that councils can improve bus services by regulating and taking public ownership of bus networks, and give them resources and full legal powers to achieve this cost-effectively, thereby ending the race to the bottom in working conditions for bus workers. (p.19)

• Give cities powers to cap rents further. (p.79)

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

• Decentralise decision-making from Whitehall and Westminster, by inviting local areas to take control of the services that matter to them most. (p.82)

• Give democratic local government enhanced powers to call on new income sources appropriate to their area to support local services and investment. (p.82)

• All areas should have access to the same opportunities and mayoral authorities should not be ranked higher in terms of the powers with which they can be granted. (p.86)

• Enact permissive legislation to empower groups of authorities to come together to establish devolved governance – for example to a Cornish Assembly or a Yorkshire Parliament. We will proceed by consensus as far as possible but will not allow one local authority to veto a coherent proposal. (p.86)

• Devolve further revenue-raising powers away from Westminster, to regions from Cornwall to North East England. Legislature to empower groups of authorities to come together to establish devolved governance and ensure that any powers devolved are matched by the funding to deliver on the needs of local people. (p.82)

• Devolve more decision-making power over key levers of economic development including transport, energy, housing and skills. (p.82)
• Introduce a capital £50 billion Regional Rebalancing Programme for infrastructure spend across the nations and regions of the UK, with local and devolved authorities given a say in how it is used, reinforced by a Just Transition Fund to support communities negatively affected by policies to tackle the climate emergency. (p.16)

• Give local authorities with responsibility for education the powers and resources to act as Strategic Education Authorities for their area, including responsibility for places planning, exclusions, administering admissions including in-year admissions, and SEND functions. (p.34)

• Give new powers to local authorities and communities to improve transport in their areas, including the ability to introduce network-wide ticketing, like in London. (p.47)

• Devolve full control of Right to Buy to local councils. (p.66)

• Give people more power, with customers holding companies delivering services to account for their failures, and with communities able to take charge of aspects of their own local development – through, for example, establishing local banks and community energy cooperatives. (p.82)

GREENS

• The Green New Deal will give power and resources for devolved governments, elected mayors and local governments to transform the communities they represent. (p.7)

• Local people will be directly involved, actively engaging all of us in the future of the places where we live and work. It will also mean new forms of common ownership throughout vital parts of our infrastructure, such as waterways, buses, parks and railways. (p.7)

• Task the Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government with reviewing on a rolling basis which powers can be further devolved from central government to local government. (p.42)

• Give responsibility for running short-distance passenger rail franchises to councils, or groups of councils that come together to work on local transport. This will give local communities a greater say in the running of the rail services they rely on. Bring all railways back into public ownership over ten years. (p.16)

• Give all councils power over bus services in their area, and over franchises for local train services. (p.41)
• Give local authorities the power to direct the newly created training and skills programmes. National government will provide the funding and democratically elected local authorities will be given the power to decide how it should be spent, to help residents’ access new jobs. (p.19)

• Give councils the ability to set planning fees locally. Tax payers are subsidising developers for the costs of their planning applications to the tune of £200 million a year – councils need the power to meet these planning costs not from central funds, but from charging developers realistic fees for the planning services councils provide for them. (p.41)
Constitutional reform

CONSERVATIVE

• Strengthen the accountability of elected Police and Crime Commissioners and expand their role. (p.19)
• Introduce identification to vote at polling stations, stopping postal vote harvesting and measures to prevent any foreign interference in elections. (p.48)
• Get rid of the Fixed Term Parliaments Act. (p.48)
• Ensure we have updated and equal Parliamentary boundaries. (p.48)
• Make it easier for British expats to vote in Parliamentary elections, and get rid of the arbitrary 15-year limit on their voting rights. (p.48)
• [After Brexit] look at the broader aspects of our constitution: the relationship between the Government, Parliament and the courts; the functioning of the Royal Prerogative; the role of the House of Lords; and access to justice for ordinary people […] In our first year we will set up a Constitution, Democracy & Rights Commission. (p.48)
• Carefully consider the recommendations of Lord Dunlop’s Independent Review into UK Government Union capability when it is published. (p.44)

LABOUR

• Bring greater transparency by extending Freedom of Information rules to cover private providers of public services, setting new standards of consistent disclosure practice and ending the six-month time limit in which the Information Commissioner can prosecute the deliberate destruction of public records. (p.82)
• Free the voices of civil society by repealing the Lobbying Act 2014 and overhauling the rules that govern corporate lobbying. Introduce a lobbying register covering both in-house lobbyists and think tanks and extending to contacts made with all senior government employees, not just ministers. (p.82)
• Act immediately to end the hereditary principle in the House of Lords, and work to abolish the House of Lords in favour of Labour’s preferred option of an elected Senate of the Nations and Regions. (p.81)
• The renewal of our Parliament will be subject to recommendations made by a UK-wide Constitutional Convention, led by a citizens’ assembly. (p.81)
• Repeal the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011 […]. Maintain 650 constituencies and respond objectively to future, independent boundary reviews. (p.82)
• Oversee the largest extension of the franchise in generations, reducing the voting age to 16, giving full voting rights to all UK residents, making sure everyone who is entitled to vote can do so by introducing a system of automatic voter registration, and abandoning plans to introduce voter ID. (p.82)

• Change how politics is funded, banning donations from tax avoiders and tax evaders, and closing loopholes that allow the use of shell companies to funnel dark money into politics. (p.82)

• Increase the financial penalties available to the Electoral Commission and require imprints for digital political adverts. (p.82)

• Stop MPs from taking paid second jobs, with limited exemptions to maintain professional registrations like nursing. (p.82)

• Replace ACOBA, the business appointments committee, with a sufficiently resourced and empowered new body, governed by a diverse and representative board and established in law. [...] will also overhaul the system of ministerial appointments to public office. (p.82)

Liberal Democrats

• Introduce a legal requirement for local authorities to inform citizens of the steps they must take to be successfully registered with far greater efforts in particular to register under-represented groups; and ensure that the UK has an automatic system of inclusion in elections. (p.81)

• Introduce a written constitution for a federal United Kingdom. (p.79)

• Put an end to wasted votes, by introducing proportional representation through the Single Transferable Vote for electing MPs, and local councilors in England. (p.81)

• Give 16 and 17-year-olds the right to vote in elections and referendums. (p.81)

• Extend the right to full participation in civic life, including the ability to stand for office or vote in UK referendums, Local Elections and General Elections, to all EU citizens who have lived in the UK for five years or more. (p.81)

• To ensure that EU citizens are not denied their vote in any election or referendum, we will implement urgent electoral law reform, in line with the Electoral Commission’s 2014 recommendations, including introducing a legal requirement for councils to inform citizens of the steps they must take to be successfully registered and making the necessary changes to ensure that the UK has an automatic system of inclusion in elections. (pp.12-13)

• Enable all UK citizens living abroad to vote for MPs in separate overseas constituencies, and to participate in UK referendums. (p.81)

• Scrap the plans to require voters to bring identification with them to vote. (p.81)

• Reform the House of Lords with a proper democratic mandate. (p.81)

• Enable Parliament, rather than the Queen-in-Council, to approve when parliament is prorogued and for how long. (p.81)

• Ensure that a new Prime Minister, and their programme for government, must win a confidence vote of MPs. (p.81)
• Take a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and bullying in Westminster and legislate to empower constituents to recall MPs who commit sexual harassment. (p.81)
• Legislate to allow all-BAME and all-LGBT+ shortlists. (p.81)
• Bring into force Section 106 of the Equality Act 2010, requiring political parties to publish candidate diversity data. (p.81)
• Extend the involvement of the Scottish Government and Welsh Government in the development of UK-wide policy frameworks. (p.83)
• Create a Joint Climate Council of the Nations to coordinate action to tackle the climate emergency. (p.83)
• Improve joint ministerial work on new cross-cutting policies, such as the UK industrial strategy. (p.83)
• Establish a dispute resolution process to resolve differences between the administrations. (p.83)
• Establish UK and local citizens’ assemblies to ensure that the public are fully engaged in finding solutions to the greatest challenges we face, such as tackling the climate emergency and the use of artificial intelligence and algorithms by the state. (p.83)

GREENS

• Legislate to require councils to switch from a Cabinet system, which concentrates power into the hands of a few councillors, to a Committee system – where all elected councillors make decisions together for the community they represent. (p.43)
• Support councils to further democratise their own processes, including introducing more participatory democracy, allowing residents to form panels and assemblies to directly input into council decision making. (p.43)
• Introduce participatory budgeting, to enable local citizens to decide how to allocate part of the council budget, through identifying, discussing and prioritising public spending projects, and having real power to decide how money is spent. (p.43)
• Back a Citizens Convention and citizens assemblies to examine further ways to strengthen democracy, including developing a written People’s Constitution and Bill of Rights, and ensure the proposals come before Parliament. This will enshrine genuine democracy at the core of our political system, making sure that ultimate power will always rest with the people. (p.37)
• Replace the First Past the Post system for parliamentary elections with a fair and proportional voting system. (p.35)
• Replace the First Past the Post system for local government with a fair and proportional voting system. Voters will be asked to elect half the Council every two years to ensure that fast changing local concerns and priorities can be expressed at the ballot box on a regular basis. (p.35)

• Create a fully elected House of Lords. Members will be elected for a maximum of ten years with half of the house being elected every 5 years. (p.35)

• Give fuller voice to regional and national identities, holding a referendum on a Cornish Assembly and increasing the powers of the current National Assembly for Wales. (p.37)

• Give 16 and 17-year-olds the right to vote and have a say on their future. Allow people to stand for Parliament and all other elected offices from the age of 16, offering support to elected young people so that they can combine their duties with studying. (p.35)

• Require all political parties to report the diversity of their candidates, so that progress in selecting more women and minorities to contest Westminster and local government seats can be monitored. This was set out in Section 106 of the Equality Act 2010 but has yet to be implemented. (p.36)

BREXIT PARTY

• Reform the voting system to make it more representative. (p.6)

• Abolish the unelected House of Lords. (p.6)

• Make MPs who switch parties subject to recall petitions. (p.6)

• It is now time for a debate on a written constitution. (p.6)

• Overhaul the postal voting system to combat fraud and abuse. (p.6)

• Reform the Supreme Court – judges who play a role in politics must be subject to political scrutiny. Ensure political balance by broadening participation in the Selection Commission or conduct interviews by Parliamentary Committee. (p.6)

• Introduce Citizens’ Initiatives to allow people to call referendums, subject to a 5 million threshold of registered voter signatures and time limitations on repeat votes. (p.7)

• Make the Civil Service more accountable to the public […] require civil servants to sign an oath to act with political neutrality. (p.7)