

Changes to website

I am considering changes to the website and content once we know the results of the General election.

I will be providing an analysis of the run up to the election by the Conservatives soon after the election. Knowing the result will enable judgements then to be made about the different views and positions taken by Ministers and backbench MPs in the many discussions held over election timing and content this year. We will not of course be getting any inside analysis from Labour about their disagreements and rapidly changing policy pitch before polling day. They seem riven over employment law, spending levels, speed to net zero and how to get anything from migration control through NHS waiting lists to nationalised businesses to work. It is best to let people concentrate on the election.

During the election period I will comment on the issues and campaigns as they unfold. I want to highlight big issues like net zero, debt and deficit, growth strategy, productivity falls in public service, living standards, bad central banking, the role of so called independent bodies and much else. An election is a good time to get change in party positions and to encourage more differentiation of offer to allow better choice.

How to have lower taxes and faster growth

I have been critical of the government for putting up with unacceptable losses by the Bank of England, the railways, the Post Office, HS 2 and other nationalised concerns. I have criticised the handling and reporting of high borrowings and interest charges. I have highlighted the unaffordable collapse in public sector productivity. I have successfully urged government to find ways to get more people off benefits into work.

The fashionable establishment gloom tells us we need to put up taxes further to alleviate spending pressures, and to cut debt relative to GDP. They refuse to see the imperative need to stop the waste and losses of the public sector or to accept that cutting the right taxes can boost growth and overall tax revenues. The huge cost burden of net zero compounds the problem, seeking to rip out fossil fuel use in the UK only to import energy and products at dearer cost from abroad, losing us huge tax revenues.

Labour would make all this worse. They want to end fuel duty sooner by accelerating the end of petrol and diesel cars. They do not propose a replacement tax on the use of electric vehicles. So what would they do about

the revenue black hole? They want to find off balance sheet ways to borrow more. They have delayed hugely expensive net zero plans whilst not changing the aims or targets. They have no plans to boost public sector productivity. They oppose some of the measures to get more people into work.

Their proposal to charge VAT on school fees might produce very little net revenue after allowing for all the extra costs of lower income parents switching children to state schools. Toughening non dom tax just drives more rich people out or keeps them away, to the point where we get less revenue from them. In the 1970s penal tax on foreigners and high earners led to the brain drain, an exodus of successful people.

Accepting the control of the five year out OBR figure for the deficit is absurd. No-one knows what the deficit will be in 5 years and government can borrow too much in the four years before the control. The government's use of this control did not stop a big debt build up. Labour want to double up on OBR influence, though they want to allow more borrowing to "invest". The way the public sector does that is often a licence to lose money, as with some Council energy and property investments and the Bank's lamentable bond dealings.

We need a commitment to cut this years deficit by taking the actions on the loss making Bank and nationalised industries I have set out, and by moving fast to return to 2019 levels of public service productivity. We need growth promoting tax cuts. The build up of interest charges can also be curtailed. Why do the main parties ignore many of these billions spent on mismanagement?

[Election kicks off with debate about energy](#)

The UK imports too much energy, making us reliant on the goodwill of foreigners. All parties to the election should renounce the mad carbon accounting which says if you use your own gas you are adding to world CO₂ but if you import the energy you are not. The import model increases world CO₂, costs us lost jobs, means we do not get the large tax revenues on extracting the gas and undermines our energy security.

Labour has come under fire from its own side for ruling out new oil and gas fields. I side with the Unions who say it makes sense to create the jobs and extract the energy at home.

The idea that setting up a Great British Energy nationalised company would solve our shortages and lower prices is wrong. If you wanted to do this there would need to be a huge expansion in grid capacity to accommodate the switch to electricity. There would need to be plenty of new back up gas fired power stations for when the wind did not blow, or plant for large scale

production of hydrogen to fuel home boilers and vehicles. Our current nationalised industries send huge bills to the taxpayer to cover their losses, legal claims against them and their investment programmes.

The Conservatives now say they are net zero realists. They see a need for a rapid roll out of nuclear, a more reliable source of low carbon power. They want more home oil and gas. They need to adjust policies on roll out of EVs, heat pumps and smart meters to reflect consumer choices and realities.

Greens and Lib Dems live in a slogan world where a windmill is the answer to every problem and comes with lower bills. Dream on.

Thank you to Wokingham

I have decided not to put my name forward in the forthcoming election. I have other things I wish to do.

It has been a privilege to represent Wokingham in nine Parliaments. I have drawn many of my campaigns from the views I have heard on doorsteps and read in my email box. We have achieved good things together for our local community and the wider nation.

I was pleased to help local Conservative Council candidates win seats in the recent local elections. We stopped the Lib Dems winning a majority despite their forecasts by highlighting the big damage they are doing to our roads, the money they waste, their neglect of public spaces and the way they are worsening our refuse service.

I will be continuing my website, maybe with some changes. I will continue to contribute to the debates about public policy. Any references remaining on this site to my work as an MP will after next Thursday be about the past.

The government takes action to curb legal migration

The government is taking action to reduce legal migration. The main Opposition parties do not want to cut back substantially on migration.

- **Cutting the number of visa applications across skilled worker, health and care and sponsored study by 25 per cent.** Thanks to the changes to visa rules, visa applications across skilled worker, health and care and sponsored study were down by 25 per cent in January to April 2024 compared to last year (Home Office, *Official Statistics*, 22 May 2024, [link](#)).
- **Bringing down the number of student dependents applying for visas by 80 per cent, ensuring net migration comes down to sustainable levels.** The latest data shows just 8,300 student dependents applied for visas in January to April 2024, a reduction of 80 per cent, down from 38,900 in the same period in 2023 (Home Office, *Official Statistics*, 22 May 2024, [link](#)).
- **Driving down the number of health and care visa applications by 76 per cent this year, as we stick to our plan to deliver sustainable staffing levels in our NHS without relying on foreign workers.** In January to April 2024, 12,400 people applied for a health and care skilled worker visa, down by 76 per cent compared to the same period last year when applications were at 119,600 (Home Office, *Official Statistics*, 22 May 2024, [link](#)).
- **Ensuring 300,000 people who came to the UK last year will not be able to come under our new visa rules, securing a more sustainable level of immigration for the long term.** In December 2023 the government announced a plan to cut migration levels and curb abuse of the immigration system. Together, this will mean 300,000 people who came to the UK last year would now not be able to come (HO, *Fact Sheet*, 1 February 2024, [link](#); *Hansard*, 25 May 2023, HCWS 800, [link](#); Home Office, *News Story*, 2 January 2023, [link](#)).
- **Changing the rules for international students and dependents as of 2024, helping to reduce net migration by an estimated 140,000.** Students can bring economic contribution to the UK but should not be at the expense of our commitment to the public to lower overall migration and ensure that migration to the UK is highly skilled, providing the most benefit and helping grow the economy (*Hansard*, 25 May 2023, HCWS 800, [link](#); Home Office, *News Story*, 2 January 2023, [link](#)).