

The General Election.

The 2017 Parliament needs to see through the twin tasks of economic recovery and the successful negotiation of a new relationship with the EU.

Both these mighty tasks were started before. The task of economic rescue began in 2010.

We have seen through the first long part of the recovery, cutting the deficit and creating conditions for many new jobs to be generated. Today many more people are in work, and more have better paid jobs. We now need to raise our sights, to work smarter so more people can be better paid. We need to continue the good progress to getting more people into work. Once in work we need to help them train, improve, and gain promotion. We also need to be encouraging of enterprise, making it easier for people to set up their own businesses, and to grow those businesses.

The task of leaving the EU whilst improving our relationship with Europe began last summer after the vote. We now need to bring people together to back a vision of what an independent UK looks like. It can be so much better. We want to be open to the world and a leader of freer world trade. We want to increase our collaborations on research, culture, investment and enterprise with the whole world, not turn our backs on European joint ventures. We do not wish to close our borders, but to welcome students, tourists, people of talent, executives of large global companies and those with the skills we need at home.

The overriding task is to get the law through to complete our exit from the EU, and to negotiate a friendly Agreement on our future trade and relations with the EU that helps them as well as us. The new Parliament will then need to move on to make those changes to our laws we need to make so that our newfound freedom leads to some improvement. The Conservatives have made clear we do not intend to remove any of the employment rights or environmental protections that have come from the EU, but to incorporate them in UK law. There they are safe, unless a party in the future with a majority wants to amend or change them having stated so in a Manifesto.

We do wish to plan for changes to the current EU laws over fishing and farming. We think we need a fishing policy that is kinder to both our fish and our fishermen than the present policy. We want an agriculture policy that helps UK farmers produce more of our food, and supports landscapes where the farmer has costs to maintain them.

I am conscious that people who voted Remain were worried about possible economic damage. So far the UK economy has continued to grow, to generate more jobs, and to only suffer the same uptick in inflation that Germany and the USA have suffered, mainly owing to oil prices. I will work tirelessly in the new Parliament if elected to see through policies that put continued growth and prosperity first.

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