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**INSIDE:**  
David Cameron on giving  
power back to local  
people – p. 6



**Carol Vorderman**  
Former Countdown star launches  
Maths Taskforce – p.3



**Supporting the victims  
of Labour's recession**  
Help for savers and pensioners – p.5

# £17,000 of debt for every man, woman and child

**Gordon Brown's debt crisis is making the recession longer and deeper, the Conservatives have warned.**

Labour's heavy borrowing during the good years meant the UK entered the credit crunch with the biggest budget deficit of any major economy.

They have now borrowed more money in just one decade than all governments in British history put together.

All this debt has to be paid off, warn the Conservatives – and it's our future generations who will be punished for Gordon Brown's reckless borrowing. Every child born this year will be saddled with £17,000 of government debt. The average person will have to work an extra four years to pay off their share of it.

The Government will soon be spending more money paying the interest on the national debt than on educating our children. The interest payments will also exceed what the Government spends on the transport

system, or on police and prisons combined.

## The wrong approach

This short-term approach, says David Cameron, is wrong – and it has to be stopped.

'We're in this mess because of too much debt – too much government debt; too much corporate debt; too much personal debt. So the answer isn't to borrow more, as Gordon Brown suggests.'

Instead, the Conservatives are urging the Government to abolish income tax on savings for everyone on the basic rate of tax, and to raise the tax allowance for pensioners by £2,000.

Not only would this help the victims of Labour's recession here and now, says Cameron, these changes 'will provide strong foundations for the new economy we plan to build.'



## IT'S YOUR MONEY!

OSBORNE UNVEILS DISCIPLINED PLANS FOR PUBLIC SPENDING – p.5

## HONEST FOOD LABELLING

MEAT LABELLED 'BRITISH' SHOULD BE BORN AND BRED IN BRITAIN – BACK PAGE

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### CONSERVATIVES.COM

Have you logged on to the Conservative party website yet?

The site, at [www.conservatives.com](http://www.conservatives.com), has all the latest news, videos and campaigns from the party, as well as clear summaries of the party's policies. You can read through their plans for change and send back your thoughts and suggestions.

The recently revamped site also features a blog with posts by David Cameron, the Shadow Cabinet, MPs and candidates, and other Conservatives from across the country.

You can also find out about campaigns the party is running in your area, get more involved by finding your local Conservatives, or post your thoughts on the site's new video wall.



See for yourself at [www.conservatives.com](http://www.conservatives.com)

### LOG ON TO FACEBOOK

The Conservatives have pages on Facebook, MySpace and other social networking sites. See the latest news, photos and videos on the following networks:



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or call 0845 833 4022



# YOUNG TROUBLEMAKERS SHOULD BE GROUNDED

Chris Grayling, the Shadow Home Secretary, has outlined plans to let the police 'ground' young people who cause trouble in their neighbourhood.

The proposal is part of a package of tough new measures to stop young people from getting dragged into a cycle of crime.

Outlining the plans, Mr Grayling said he wanted to find 'a 21st-century alternative to what would once have been a clip around the ear from the local bobby'.

'Plenty of teenagers stray off the straight and narrow sometimes,' he said. 'But today there are no consequences when they do. That has to change.'

One of the ways he suggested doing that was giving police the power to take young troublemakers to the police station and make their parents come and get them.

Another proposal is the introduction of curfews so the police can 'ground' persistent offenders at home for up to one month. By doing so, said Mr Grayling, 'we can stop them from getting so far into trouble that they end up in the criminal justice system.'

Mr Grayling stressed that he did not want to criminalise children. 'But I do want our police and our society to be able firmly to say "no",' he explained – 'before those young people get used to flouting the law.'



Grayling: Keeping young people out of crime

STEVE BACK

# Let people have their say on Europe

## CONSERVATIVES WANT A REFERENDUM ON THE LISBON TREATY

**The Conservatives want to let the people have a vote on the Lisbon Treaty – the renamed Constitution for the European Union.**

During the last election, the three main parties all promised to put the issue to a vote – but Labour and the Liberal Democrats went back on their promises and pushed the Treaty through Parliament without giving the public a say.

This, say the Conservatives, is undemocratic. Unlike the other parties, they stand by their election promise. If the Tories win the next general election and the

Lisbon Treaty is not yet in force, they have promised to put it to a referendum of the British people, recommending a 'no' vote and respecting the view of the electorate.

### Undemocratic

Even if the Treaty is brought into force before the general election, it would have no democratic legitimacy, the party argues – the British people would have had no opportunity to have their say on it either in a referendum or at an election. That, say the Conservatives, would be

unacceptable – and they would not let matters rest there.

'We strongly uphold the principle that people should have freedom and control over their own lives,' explains Shadow Foreign Secretary William Hague. 'It should no longer be possible for Governments to hand over power to the EU without the British people's explicit permission.'

The Conservatives have also promised to amend the law so that any new treaty which transfers powers from the UK to the EU would be subject to a referendum of the British people.



STEVE BACK

# Carol will make sure Tory plans add up

Former Countdown star and maths whizz Carol Vorderman is helping the Conservatives draw up plans to make maths teaching in Britain's state schools as good as anywhere else in the world.

Under Labour, more than 3.5 million children have left school without at least a C grade in GCSE maths – and nearly half of all eleven-year-olds leave primary school without basic numeracy skills.

This, stresses David Cameron, has to change.

'Basic numeracy is not a nice-to-have, it's a must-have,' he said. 'From checking your bank balance, to doing the weekly shop or making the most of the sales, being able to add, subtract, multiply and divide is something we rely on often without thinking about it.'

He hailed Carol, who left the hit Channel 4 show after 26 years last December, as the 'perfect choice' to lead his party's Maths Taskforce:

'She's a well-respected public figure who not only knows maths inside out, but also how to extend that knowledge to a wider audience in an inspirational way,' he said.

It's clear this is an issue of personal importance to Carol –

who was raised on free school meals and hand-me-down clothes, and who won a place to study at Cambridge.

## Critically important

'Maths is critically important to the future of this country,' she says, 'but Britain is falling behind the best performing countries. As a single parent of two children, and as a school governor, this concerns me greatly.'

'If our children are to get the best jobs in the future and Britain is to emerge stronger from the recession we have little choice but to sort maths out now.'

As part of her work for the taskforce, Carol will examine methods used to teach maths in other countries, whether tests in Britain are tough enough, and how to break the culture of 'maths fear'.

### TELL CAROL YOUR VIEWS

Send her an email at [carol@mathstaskforce.com](mailto:carol@mathstaskforce.com) and let her know what you think can be done to raise standards.

## RECESSION MAKES SCHOOL REFORM VITAL

Michael Gove, the Shadow Schools Secretary, has stressed that today's 'grim economic realities' mean that education reform is more vital now than ever.

The Conservatives are already committed to radical reforms of the education system. But the bleak economic situation means that change is all the more important.

'Reforming schools is vital to strengthening our economy,' says Mr Gove. 'Rather than slowing down the pace of reform, we need to accelerate the drive to improve our schools.'

Independent forecasts warn that there may soon be just half a million jobs in our economy for low-skilled workers. That, say the Conservatives, is another reason to equip future generations with the skills they need.



Michael Gove

### 'Don't waste talent'

The present education system is 'shockingly bad' at promoting social mobility and helping the poorest in our society, says Mr Gove. Of the 13,000 children who got three A grades at A-level last year, just 189 came from the poorest eighth of our society. One in

five children leaves school without even a single grade C at GCSE.

That lack of opportunity, says Mr Gove, is 'plain immoral'. On top of that, however, it is economically foolish: 'We cannot afford to waste any talent. We must maximise the country's economic firepower.'

'That is why we are determined to radically reform our education system, to ensure our schools, and our children, can compete with the world's best.'

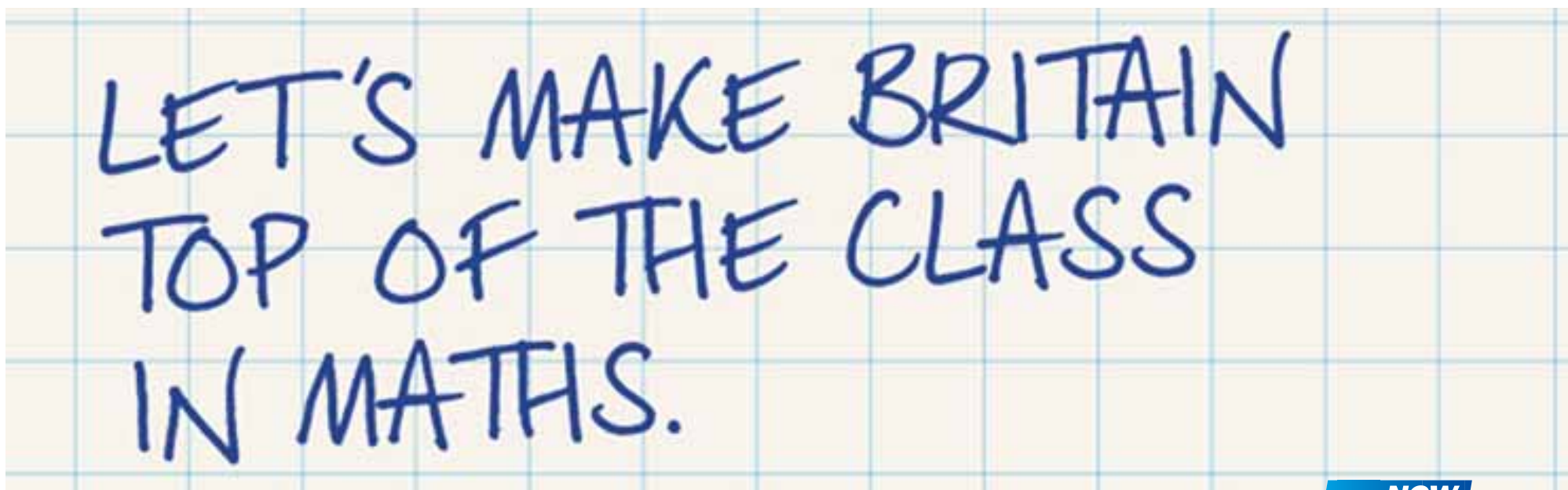
## THE CONSERVATIVE PLAN FOR CHANGE

### A long-term programme to close the educational gap:

- Building hundreds of good new schools within the state system.
- Shifting the balance of power away from the government and towards parents.
- Removing the obstacles which prevent new schools being set up.
- Encouraging smaller and more varied schools to respond to parents' demands.

### Immediate steps to improve standards in all our schools:

- Improve discipline and behaviour in schools by shifting the balance of power in the classroom back to the teacher.
- Ensure more teaching by ability to stretch the strongest and nurture the weakest.
- Look at reforming the testing regime in primary schools to reduce bureaucracy and focus on every pupil's real needs.



Under Labour we've fallen to 24th in the world at maths, behind countries including Canada and Korea.

**NOW  
FOR  
CHANGE**

## EDITORIAL

### Labour's debt crisis

Labour have brought Britain to the brink of bankruptcy.

While many countries are facing economic challenges at the moment, Labour's failure to prepare us for the gathering storm means that Britain will suffer more than other countries.

According to the International Monetary Fund, the UK will be the worst hit of the major world economies this year.

We entered this downturn with a larger budget deficit than more than 100 countries – including places like Kazakhstan and Uganda.

You'd think, by now, the Prime Minister would have realised that it was too much debt which got us into this mess in the first place.

But his solution is to borrow even more money. His new plans will take our national debt to over £1 trillion.

All this debt has to be paid off. Future generations will be punished for Labour's reckless borrowing.

A new child born today will already be saddled with £17,000 of Government debt.

Soon, the Government will be spending more public money on paying off the interest on its debts than on educating our children.

### Ineffective

What's worse, the things Gordon Brown is doing with all this extra money just aren't working.

He bailed the banks out, but that hasn't got credit flowing again to businesses and families.

His repossessions plan hasn't stopped homes being repossessed.

And he spent £12 billion on a VAT cut when shops were already slashing prices – but that hasn't got people spending again.

Major retailers have said that it has had no effect. The chief executive of Sainsbury's called it 'a drop in the ocean'.

### Time for change

As a country we have lived for too long on borrowed time and too much borrowed money.

We need a government that lives within its means instead of spending taxpayers' money like there's no tomorrow.

We need an economy built on savings, not debt.

We need to change Britain from a 'spend, spend, spend' society to a 'save, save, save' society.

Those are some of the long-term economic changes the next Conservative government will make.

The longer Labour are in, the worse the debt crisis gets.

Every week the burdens on our children get higher.

They deserve better. That's why now is the time for change.



Lansley: Dignity, privacy and safety for hospital patients

## End indignity of mixed-sex wards

**Shadow Health Secretary Andrew Lansley has described Labour's plans to reduce the number of mixed-sex hospital wards as 'too little too late'.**

He was speaking after a Freedom of Information request showed that more than one in seven hospitals still have open-plan, mixed-sex wards.

Some patients are not even given separate bathrooms: nearly a third of hospital trusts and mental health

trusts do not guarantee single-sex washing facilities.

Mr Lansley, said that patients should not have to suffer this indignity. 'Despite hearing Labour Ministers make promise after to promise to end the scandal of mixed-sex wards, we have not seen the necessary action,' he said.

'If Labour were serious about stopping patients being forced to

share wards with the opposite sex they would copy our pledge to double the number of single rooms in the NHS.'

The Conservatives' plans would provide single rooms for all new mothers and patients going into hospital for planned care, as well as for all mental health patients.

This would guarantee patients privacy, dignity and safety in hospital.

## SCRAP THE BIN TAX, URGE CONSERVATIVES

**Caroline Spelman, the Shadow Secretary of State for Local Government, has said that bin taxes are now 'dead in the water' and should be scrapped completely.**

The Government had planned to pilot the taxes in five councils, before introducing them across the country without a vote in Parliament.

The new scheme could have seen residents charged for every sack of rubbish they threw away, or had microchips fitted in

their in wheelie bins.

But, in a snub to Gordon Brown, Labour's Environment Minister has been forced to admit that no local authorities have expressed an interest in running the scheme.

'The bin tax laws should now be repealed and taken off the statute book,' says Caroline Spelman. 'These unpopular new taxes would harm the environment by fuelling fly-tipping and backyard burning, and increase tax bills for struggling families.'



# IT'S YOUR MONEY, SAYS OSBORNE

## Conservatives unveil plan for disciplined spending

The Conservatives have invited people to tell them what they think of the party's plans to create a new culture of financial discipline across Government.

Launching a consultation document, *It's Your Money*, the Shadow Chancellor George Osborne attacked Labour for creating a climate in which civil servants are forced to 'shovel money out the door as fast as possible, regardless of how well that money is spent or how it can be paid for.'

He warned that a Conservative Government would inherit 'the worst set of public finances any incoming government in Britain has ever had to deal with' – and outlined a series of proposals to introduce financial discipline.

Conservatives would create strong incentives for better financial discipline, and make clear that civil servants have a responsibility to



taxpayers.

It would dramatically improve the transparency of information on public spending and introduce new measures showing the effectiveness of financial management across government.

A Conservative Government would also reward public sector

employees for suggesting ideas that generate cost savings.

Mr Osborne stressed: 'Creating a new culture of financial discipline in Whitehall is not going to be easy. It will be like turning around a supertanker. But be in no doubt, we have the political will and detailed plans to put Britain on the right course.'

To find out more, visit [www.conservatives.com](http://www.conservatives.com) –  
or email your comments to [disciplinedspending@conservatives.com](mailto:disciplinedspending@conservatives.com)

## Conservatives pledge help for savers and pensioners

David Cameron has promised help for the victims of Labour's recession, and said he will work to beat Britain's 'addiction to debt'.

Conservatives are urging the Government to abolish income tax on savings for basic rate taxpayers and to raise the personal allowance for pensioners by £2,000.

These changes could be made in the very next Budget, say the Conservatives – by getting the Government to tighten its belt like the rest of the country.

Savers have suffered after interest rates were slashed to try and tackle the credit crunch. Pensioners have suffered from a

decade of Labour's pensions tax. Introduced by Gordon Brown in 1997, it has cost pension funds £5 billion a year.

'Not only would these measures help people now suffering from Labour's recession,' said Mr Cameron, 'but they will help build a more responsible savings culture. It will help end Britain's addiction to debt under Gordon Brown.'

### A new direction

Labour's policies to deal with the recession are not working, he added. 'The banking bailout has not got lending flowing again, the

stamp duty holiday hasn't stopped house prices falling, and the VAT cut actually made things worse by undermining confidence and adding to Labour's debt crisis,' he said.

'We are at the end of the road under Labour. There is no going forward with them. This country needs to strike out in a new direction.'

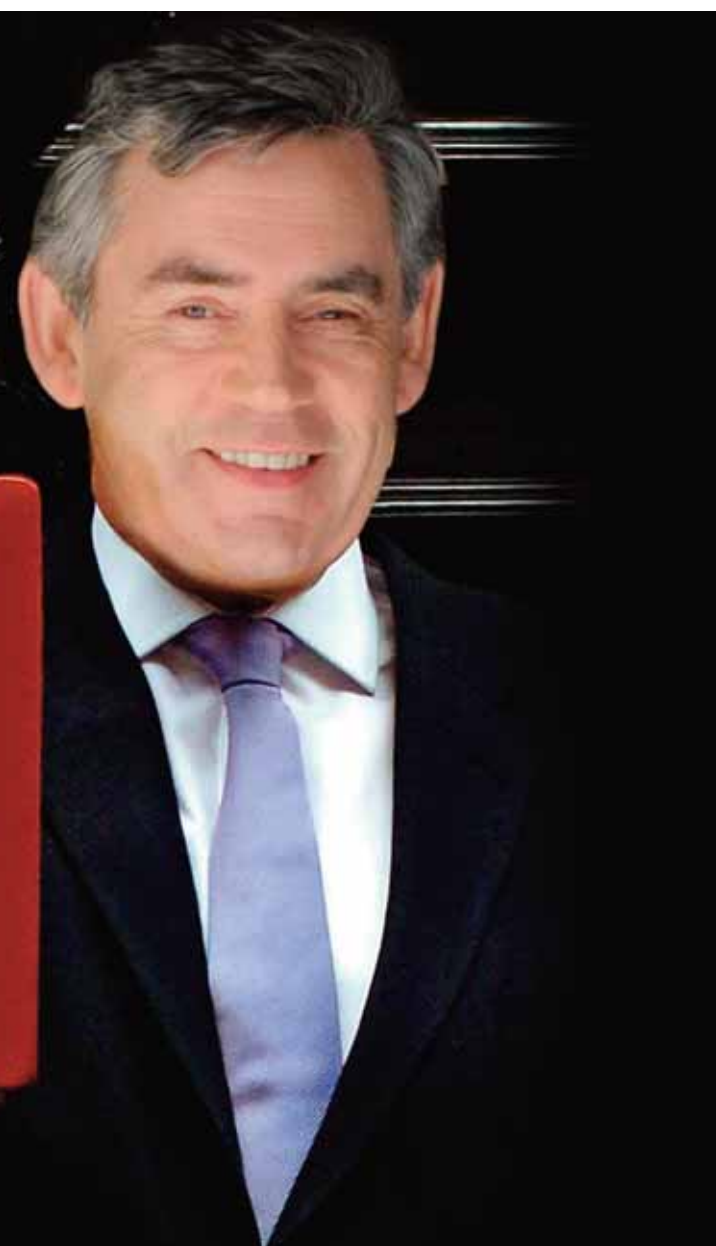


## HOW MUCH IS LABOUR'S DEBT CRISIS COSTING YOU?

Thanks to Gordon Brown,  
your share of the national debt is

£17,000

and that's rising  
by £42 every week



# Helping people through the current recession

## CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES LAUNCH 'JOB CLUBS' ACROSS THE UNITED KINGDOM

**With many people hit by job losses or with the threat of redundancy hanging over them, it's clear that now is a worrying time for families across the country.**

But local Conservative campaigners are doing their bit to help the victims of the recession.

Research shows that the best way to find another job is through friends, family or social networks. That's why the party's candidates are setting up job clubs – community groups to help people expand their network of contacts and provide support for people out of work.

One candidate, Chris Skidmore, from the Gloucestershire constituency of Kingswood, explained the importance of the scheme.

'Meeting people at the club, the reality of Gordon Brown's recession and its devastating impact on local life was clear to see,' he said. 'One lady was so desperate to find a job she had walked over five miles for an interview. Another gentleman knew that he would be out of work by the end of the month and had started looking for jobs now.'

'The aim of the Job Club is to provide the community support and local help that people looking for a job deserve,' he continued. 'We can't guarantee them a job, but what we can do is make sure that their CV stands out from the rest of the pile, help with interview practice, and put people in contact with local businesses.'

By coming to the job club meetings, which are free to attend, members are able

to share in each other's job-hunting experiences and offer each other encouragement.

Guest speakers and local employers are invited to offer advice on interview technique, CV and letter writing, presentation skills, and volunteering opportunities.

'When someone is made unemployed, not only is it incredibly frightening, it's

incredibly complicated,' explains Conservative leader David Cameron. 'They're often left to navigate a maze of qualifications or career options all on their own – leaving them bewildered, bemused and even more lost.'

'That's why job clubs are so powerful. These were abolished at the end of the last recession and we need to see more of them come back now.'



Tony Baldry, the MP for Banbury, is running the scheme in his area.



Conservative candidate Chris Skidmore (R) at a Job Club meeting in Kingswood

# MAKE YOURSELF HEARD...

Any British citizen who has lived abroad for less than 15 years can vote in UK Parliamentary elections

Visit [www.dontleaveyourvoteathome.com](http://www.dontleaveyourvoteathome.com) to have your say.



## POWER TO THE PEOPLE! Making local government more accountable

**David Cameron has unveiled plans to make local government more accountable to the public and to give local people greater say on issues affecting their communities.**

The Conservative leader said he wanted to see 'a fundamental shift of power and wealth' back to local people and institutions.

Under the Tory plans, powers would be stripped from the regional development agencies – unelected bodies created in 1999 – and returned to elected representatives on local councils.

Residents would also be given the power to veto high council tax rises by forcing a public

vote on steep tax increases.

### Empowerment

The party also wants to give people in major cities outside London the opportunity to decide whether they want to introduce directly-elected mayors.

Mr Cameron said that decentralising power was an 'absolutely essential' part of Conservative thinking.

'Instead of some ruling class making decisions about everyone else,' he said, 'we believe in everyone taking responsibility for shaping their lives, their families and their

neighbourhoods.'

The Tory leader said he wants to see power and responsibility 'in the hands of the people, not the politicians or the bureaucrats.'

'I strongly believe that our vision of an empowering state rather than the current reality of an overpowering state offers the path to the good society and the good life we all seek.'

The next election won't just be about whether to transfer power from Labour to the Conservatives, he said: 'It will also be about whether to transfer power from the central state to local people and local institutions.'

# Liam Fox: The way we treat our armed forces is a national disgrace

**A decade of Labour's neglect has left our Armed Forces overstretched, undermanned, and in possession of worn-out equipment, says Shadow Defence Secretary Liam Fox.**

In total the Armed Forces are short of 5,790 personnel. Many of the shortages fall in key roles, such as

helicopter pilots, which are desperately needed for support in Afghanistan.

Despite engaging our military in Iraq and Afghanistan – two conflicts with 'a level of intensity not experienced since the Korean War', says Fox – the Government has made cuts to the Forces.

In 2004, the Government reduced the number of infantry battalions from 40 to 36. The same year, it cut the helicopter budget by £1.4 billion.

More recently, defence spending for science and technology has been cut by 19 per cent. This, says Dr Fox, 'is testament to Labour's short-sighted approach to defence policy – especially during the current economic crisis, since science and technology companies employ thousands of people throughout the UK.'

He has also highlighted the poor quality of accommodation for Service families, cuts in the Royal Navy, and the lack of kit for frontline forces.

Yet it has emerged that, at the same time as these shortcomings, the Ministry of Defence spent more than £2 billion to pay external consultants and £2.3 billion for the refurbishment of the MoD headquarters.

'The Government has a responsibility, and a moral obligation, to ensure that when it sends troops into harm's way, they are the best trained and best equipped troops in the world,' says Fox.

The Conservatives have pledged to launch a Strategic Defence Review if elected to government. There has not been such a review since 1998 – which is 'completely unacceptable,' says Fox.

Fox: The Government has a 'moral obligation' to our troops.



STEVE BACK



## SAVE OUR PUBS!

Conservatives have launched a campaign to save the Great British pub.

Pubs are an important part of community life in rural and urban areas across the country – but nearly six pubs are closing every day, the victims of the credit crunch and rising alcohol duty.

One third of the cost of a pint is already tax – yet the Government plans to increase beer tax further.

'For too long the Government has tried to tackle binge drinking by punishing responsible drinkers and landlords,' said Shadow Culture Secretary Jeremy Hunt. 'With massive tax hikes and heavy-handed regulation, all Labour will succeed in doing is closing down more pubs.'

Sign the petition online at [www.conservatives.com](http://www.conservatives.com)

## NO BANK BONUSES OVER £2,000, SAYS CAMERON

David Cameron has said that no cash bonuses over £2,000 should be paid to employees of banks which have been bailed out by the taxpayer.

Setting the limit at £2,000 would mean that cashiers on average salaries are not unfairly punished.

The Tory leader said: 'People who work hard are seeing billions of pounds of their tax money being paid out and are rightly angry about it.'

## UK SET FOR WORST RECESSION IN THE WORLD

Projections by the International Monetary Fund have indicated that the UK economy will shrink by 2.8 per cent this year.

If their forecasts are accurate, Britain will this year endure the worst downturn of any major country – and the worst year for the economy since 1948.

Shadow Chancellor George Osborne challenged Gordon Brown to answer the 'simplest question of all': 'If Britain is well prepared as he claims, why are we facing the worst recession in the world?'

## A GOOD SCHOOL FOR MY CHILDREN

TEACHING BY ABILITY FOR EVERY CHILD AND TOUGH DISCIPLINE IN EVERY CLASSROOM

 Conservatives



# WHEN YOU BUY A 'BRITISH' PORK PIE, YOU PROBABLY ASSUME THAT THE PORK COMES FROM BRITAIN.

In fact, meat from abroad can be imported into Britain, processed into bacon, sausages or pies, and then labelled to suggest they are British.

The Conservatives think this is dishonest – and have launched a campaign for 'honest labelling' to restore trust and allow people to choose British food with confidence.

'Meat labelled "British" should be born and bred in Britain, raised to our high welfare standards,' explains Nick Herbert, the Shadow Food Secretary.

'Other EU countries fight for the interests of their consumers and their farming industry within the trading rules. It's time for the British Government to show the same spine.'

The Conservatives have drawn up a Parliamentary Bill to make country of origin labelling mandatory, and are pressing the Government to back it.

The campaign has already won support from a number of well-known chefs, broadcasters and campaigners:



## Clarissa Dickson Wright

'This is a project dear to my heart. Lying about anything is wrong because it precludes true choice. If this legislation is implemented it will empower the consumer.'

## Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall

'Consumers have a right to know where their food comes from and what's in it. Any policy... that stands in the way of that is wrong, and must be fought.'



## Prue Leith

'Rules which allow imported food, produced to welfare standards that would be illegal in this country, to be labelled British are a disgrace and have to change. They undermine efforts to improve animal welfare, dupe consumers and hurt our farmers.'



## Anthony Worrall Thompson

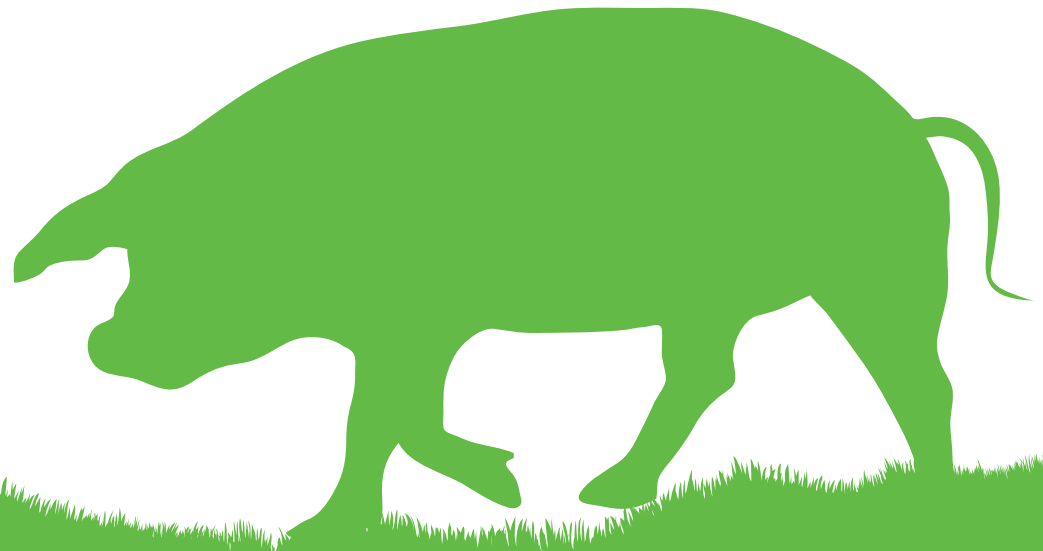
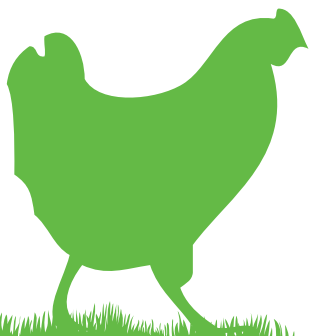
'Enabling informed consumer choice is vital if we are to improve standards of animal welfare. A system of honest food labelling, which leaves consumers in no doubt about where food comes from, is long overdue'



## RSPCA

'We think it is essential that all meat be clearly and consistently labelled to allow consumers to make an informed choice. In these hard economic times, shoppers often seek out specifically-labelled products purely because they want to support certain farming practices.'

Find out more, and sign the petition, at [www.honestfoodcampaign.com](http://www.honestfoodcampaign.com)



# honest food

## TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

### Have you ever voted Conservative?

- Always  Sometimes  Never

### Which Party do you think you will vote for in the next election?

- Conservative  Labour  
 Liberal Democrat  Other .....

### Help us to win...

- I can help deliver leaflets  
 I can display a poster  
 I would like further details about joining the Conservative Party

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