

**We know a simple truth. Britain only succeeds when working families succeed. It is how our country has won through in the past and how it will succeed in the future. But so many people are putting in the hours and not seeing the rewards. That is why there is a cost of living crisis. Our first task in government is to change our economy so that it works for all of Britain's businesses and working people.**

The Conservatives claim that the economy is fixed and that our country is on the right track. But the economy is not creating the productive, high-skilled and well-paid jobs that we need to raise living standards. The lack of rewarding work and training opportunities is trapping hundreds of thousands of young people in a cycle of benefits and low-paid, insecure jobs. And consumers are overcharged in markets they rely on to meet their everyday needs, whether to heat their homes or travel to work.

For most of the 20th century, there was a vital link between the success of the country and family finances. As the country got better off, so did working people. But the link between the success of the country and the family budget has been broken. Since 2010, working people are earning on average £1,600 less a year after inflation. We have seen the greatest fall in wages over a parliament since 1874.

Over five million people are in low-paid jobs, earning less than the Living Wage. There are 1.8 million zero-hours contracts. 1.3 million are working part-time because they cannot get a full-time job. Half of all those in poverty live in working households. 900,000 people, many of them in work, used food banks last year.

This cost-of-living crisis is bad for families, bad for business, and bad for Britain. Lower levels of pay have meant lower tax receipts and higher spending on social security.

We will have to work and earn our way toward a more fairly shared and enduring prosperity. We are a great commercial nation that has been at the centre of global trade for centuries. We have a long tradition of innovation and enterprise.