

accept the recommendations of the Low Pay Commission that the National Minimum Wage should rise to £6.70 this autumn, on course for a Minimum Wage that will be over £8 by the end of the decade. We also support the Living Wage and will continue to encourage businesses and other organisations to pay it whenever they can afford it. We will also take further steps to eradicate abuses of workers, such as non-payment of the Minimum Wage, exclusivity in zero-hours contracts and exploitation of migrant workers.

We will continue to invest in science, back our industrial strategies and make Britain the technology centre of Europe

Great science is worthwhile in its own right and yields enormous practical benefits too – curing diseases, driving technological innovation, promoting business investment and informing public policy for the better. We ring-fenced the science budget by making difficult choices to reduce spending in other areas. Now we will invest new capital on a record scale – £6.9 billion in the UK's research infrastructure up to 2021 – which will mean new equipment, new laboratories and new research institutes. This long-term commitment includes £2.9 billion for a Grand Challenges Fund, which will allow us to invest in major research facilities of national significance, such as the new Alan Turing Institute, and projects such as the Polar Research Ship and Square Kilometre Array. We have boosted research and development tax credits and we will continue to support our network of University Enterprise Zones, ensuring that Britain's world-beating universities are able to make money from the technology they develop. We will support our modern industrial strategies, such as our successful Life Sciences strategy, to help people compete and win in the intense global race for high value, high knowledge jobs. We will work with the Automotive Council in support of our resurgent car industry and direct further resources towards the Eight Great Technologies – among them robotics and nanotechnology – where Britain is set to be a global leader. We have delivered a network of catapult centres – R&D hubs in the technologies of the future – and we will create more to ensure that we have a bold and

comprehensive offer in place for Britain's researchers and innovators.

We will support the rural economy and strengthen local communities

We have the land, the technology, and the entrepreneurial flair to enable us to make the most of the economic potential of our rural areas. We will provide rural Britain with near universal superfast broadband by the end of the next Parliament and secure the future of 3,000 rural Post Offices. We know how important it is to preserve vital community assets such as pubs, town halls and sports facilities, so we will strengthen the Community Right to Bid that we created. We will extend the length of time communities have to purchase these assets, and require owners to set a clear 'reserve' price for the community to aim for when bidding. We will set up a Pub Loan Fund to enable community groups to obtain small loans to pay for feasibility work, lawyers' fees, or materials for refurbishment, where they have bid to run the pub as part of our reforms to the Community Asset Register.

We will champion our farmers and food producers

We will set out a long-term vision for the future of British farming, working with industry to develop a 25 year plan to grow more, buy more and sell more British food. We will allow farmers to smooth their profits for tax purposes over five years, up from the current two years, to counter income volatility. We will treble the number of apprenticeships in food, farming and agri-tech, as part of our plan to secure three million more apprenticeships. We will support a science-led approach on GM crops and pesticides and implement our 25-year strategy to eradicate bovine TB. We will liberate farmers from red tape by coordinating all visits through a single Farm Inspection Taskforce, which will involve farmers themselves and use data from existing industry schemes, such as Red Tractor. We will push for further reform of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy. We will promote British food abroad by setting up a Great British Food Unit to help trademark and promote local foods around the world and back British food at home, by guaranteeing that all central government departments purchase food to British standards of production by the end of the Parliament. We will also help consumers to buy British by pushing for country of origin labelling in Europe, particularly for dairy products, following on from

Inequality is down from the record high it reached under Labour