

The Coalition: our programme for government	Comments
<p><b>CIVIL LIBERTIES</b> We will be strong in defence of freedom. The Government believes that the British state has become too authoritarian, and that over the past decade it has abused and eroded fundamental human freedoms and historic civil liberties. We need to restore the rights of individuals in the face of encroaching state power, in keeping with Britain’s tradition of freedom and fairness.</p>	
<p>We will adopt the protections of the Scottish model for the DNA database.</p>	<p>If these provisions had been in place some convictions for serious crimes, inc. murder and rape, may not have been secured.</p>
<p>We will protect historic freedoms through the defence of trial by jury.</p>	<p>Meaning unclear, but may signal a reversal of some ‘instant sanctions’ e.g. Fixed Penalty Notices.</p>
<p>We will introduce safeguards against the misuse of anti-terrorism legislation.</p>	<p>The tabloid press has persistently described the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (‘RIPA’) as anti-terrorism legislation, which was never the case.</p>
<p>We will further regulate CCTV.</p>	<p>Details awaited.</p>
<p><b>COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT</b> The Government believes that it is time for a fundamental shift of power from Westminster to people. We will promote decentralisation and democratic engagement, and we will end the era of top-down government by giving new powers to local councils, communities, neighbourhoods and individuals.</p>	
<p>We will ban the use of powers in the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) by councils, unless they are signed off by a magistrate and required for stopping serious crime.</p>	<p>This has the potential to impede a range of investigations, especially those undertaken by Trading Standards.</p>

	<p><b>CRIME AND POLICING</b> The Government believes that we need radical action to reform our criminal justice system. We need police forces that have greater freedom from Ministerial control and are better able to deal with the crime and anti-social behaviour that blights people's lives, but which are much more accountable to the public they serve.</p>	
	<p>We will reduce time-wasting bureaucracy that hampers police operations, and introduce better technology to make policing more effective while saving taxpayers' money.</p>	
	<p>We will amend the health and safety laws that stand in the way of common sense policing.</p>	
	<p>We will seek to spread information on which policing techniques and sentences are most effective at cutting crime across the Criminal Justice System</p>	<p>Longstanding Home Office approach.</p>
	<p>We will have a full review of the terms and conditions for police officer employment.</p>	
	<p>We will introduce measures to make the police more accountable through oversight by a directly elected individual, who will be subject to strict checks and balances by locally elected representatives.</p>	
	<p>We will oblige the police to publish detailed local crime data statistics every month, so the public can get proper information about crime in their neighbourhoods and hold the police to account for their performance.</p>	<p>Shares with the previous Government the suggestion that there is a significant public appetite for more performance information – this is debatable.</p>
	<p>We will require police forces to hold regular 'beat meetings' so that residents can hold them to account.</p>	<p>Already in place?</p>
	<p>We will make hospitals share non-confidential information with the police so they know where gun and knife crime is happening and can target stop-and-search in gun and knife</p>	<p>May prove useful (if effective).</p>

	crime hot spots.	
	We will give people greater legal protection to prevent crime and apprehend criminals.	
	We will ensure that people have the protection that they need when they defend themselves against intruders.	
	We will ban the sale of alcohol below cost price.	The definition of 'cost price' may prove challenging (e.g. the retail price of spirits is primarily duty).
	We will review alcohol taxation and pricing to ensure it tackles binge drinking without unfairly penalising responsible drinkers, pubs and important local industries.	
	We will overhaul the Licensing Act to give local authorities and the police much stronger powers to remove licences from, or refuse to grant licences to, any premises that are causing problems.	Likely to prove useful.
	We will allow councils and the police to shut down permanently any shop or bar found to be persistently selling alcohol to children.	Likely to prove useful.
	We will double the maximum fine for under-age alcohol sales to £20,000.	More likely to be 'declaratory' than practical. Suspension or revocation of licences is often a more effective approach than prosecution.

	We will permit local councils to charge more for late-night licences to pay for additional policing.	May prove useful, depending on the detail.
	We will promote better recording of hate crimes against disabled, homosexual and transgender people, which are frequently not centrally recorded.	
	We will introduce a system of temporary bans on new 'legal highs' while health issues are considered by independent experts. We will not permanently ban a substance without receiving full advice from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs.	
	We will review the operation of the Extradition Act – and the US/UK extradition treaty – to make sure it is even-handed.	
	<b>DEFICIT REDUCTION</b> The Government believes that it is the most vulnerable who are most at risk from the debt crisis, and that it is deeply unfair that the Government could have to spend more on debt interest payments than on schools. So we need immediate action to tackle the deficit in a fair and responsible way, ensure that taxpayers' money is spent responsibly, and get the public finances back on track.	
	We will significantly accelerate the reduction of the structural deficit over the course of a Parliament, with the main burden of deficit reduction borne by reduced spending rather than increased taxes.	Likely to be the biggest single impact on the work of the Partnership. Risk that funding streams e.g. BCU Fund, Safer & Stronger Communities Fund, Pooled Transfer Budget, DIP Grant etc may be reduced or eliminated without understanding of the

		implications.
	<p><b>EUROPE</b> The Government believes that Britain should play a leading role in an enlarged European Union, but that no further powers should be transferred to Brussels without a referendum. This approach strikes the right balance between constructive engagement with the EU to deal with the issues that affect us all, and protecting our national sovereignty.</p>	
	<p>We will approach forthcoming legislation in the area of criminal justice on a case-by-case basis, with a view to maximising our country’s security, protecting Britain’s civil liberties and preserving the integrity of our criminal justice system. Britain will not participate in the establishment of any European Public Prosecutor.</p>	
	<p><b>IMMIGRATION</b> The Government believes that immigration has enriched our culture and strengthened our economy, but that it must be controlled so that people have confidence in the system. We also recognise that to ensure cohesion and protect our public services, we need to introduce a cap on immigration and reduce the number of nonEU immigrants.</p>	
	<p>We will create a dedicated Border Police Force, as part of a refocused Serious Organised Crime Agency, to enhance national security, improve immigration controls and crack down on the trafficking of people, weapons and drugs. We will work with police forces to strengthen arrangements to deal with serious crime and other cross-boundary policing challenges, and extend collaboration between forces to deliver better value for money.</p>	Impact on UKBA unclear.
	<p><b>JOBS AND WELFARE</b> The Government believes that we need to encourage responsibility and fairness in the welfare system. That means providing help for those who cannot work, training and targeted support for those looking for work, but sanctions for those who turn down reasonable offers of work or training.</p>	
	<p>We will end all existing welfare to work programmes and create a single welfare to work programme to help all unemployed people get back into work.</p>	<p>Without differentiation of programmes there may be an even greater risk that offenders and those with drug problems are pushed to the back of the queue than at present.</p>

	We will ensure that Jobseeker's Allowance claimants facing the most significant barriers to work are referred to the new welfare to work programme immediately, not after 12 months as is currently the case. We will ensure that Jobseeker's Allowance claimants aged under 25 are referred to the programme after a maximum of six months.	
	<b>JUSTICE</b> The Government believes that more needs to be done to ensure fairness in the justice system. This means introducing more effective sentencing policies, as well as overhauling the system of rehabilitation to reduce reoffending and provide greater support and protection for the victims of crime.	
	We will introduce a 'rehabilitation revolution' that will pay independent providers to reduce reoffending, paid for by the savings this new approach will generate within the criminal justice system.	Savings primarily in prisons and courts? Current prisons building programme will take capacity up to 96,000 places.
	We will conduct a full review of sentencing policy to ensure that it is effective in deterring crime, protecting the public, punishing offenders and cutting reoffending. In particular, we will ensure that sentencing for drug use helps offenders come off drugs.	
	We will explore alternative forms of secure, treatment-based accommodation for mentally ill and drugs offenders.	
	We will implement the Prisoners' Earnings Act 1996 to allow deductions from the earnings of prisoners in properly paid work to be paid into the Victims' Fund.	
	We will consider how to use proceeds from the Victim Surcharge to deliver up to 15 new rape crisis centres, and give existing rape crisis centres stable, long-term funding.	
	We will carry out a fundamental review of Legal Aid to make it work more efficiently.	

	We will change the law so that historical convictions for consensual gay sex with over16s will be treated as spent and will not show up on criminal records checks.	
	We will extend anonymity in rape cases to defendants.	
	We will introduce effective measures to tackle anti-social behaviour and low-level crime, including forms of restorative justice such as Neighbourhood Justice Panels.	