

**REVEALED:** Ground-breaking survey shows how core values of decency and compassion still form the bedrock of our society...silencing the hatemongers

# WHAT BRITAIN REALLY THINKS

**EIGHT PAGE SPECIAL**



THE far-right's destructive portrayal of a divided and broken Britain is today shattered by a massive poll testing the mood of the nation.

In the biggest survey of its kind, the core values of tolerance and open mindedness of Britons shine through.

The 'Giga Poll' of more than 45,300 people covering over 80 issues provides hope that the country is not in the grip of racial tensions. Green entrepreneur Dale Vince

commissioned the research in a bid to determine 'what Britain really thinks' against a backdrop of far-right rhetoric dominating the news agenda.

He said: "Of course there are concerns over the levels of immigration, and those coming here in small boats, but the British people through this extensive polling show their true colours – and those are the British qualities of compassion,

decency, and tolerance." The polling undertaken by anti-fascist campaign group HOPE not hate, and supported by the TUC, provides a fascinating snapshot of the views and attitudes of Britons which will give Sir Keir Starmer food for thought.

Labour trails Nigel Farage's Reform UK by six clear points in the poll – and the public's dissatisfaction with the Government's performance is laid bare with two-thirds believing

their concerns and fears are not being listened to.

Worryingly for Labour, there is little optimism that they can turn things around with four-in-ten people believing their personal financial situation will get worse over the coming years, with a shocking two-thirds of people at best feeling they are getting by – and making cutbacks – with at worst skipping meals or missing rent payments.

# Silent majority WON'T be tricked by right-wing toxic tactics

**RIGHT-WING** politicians are failing to “brain wash” the public into thinking Britain is a lawless nation full of racial tensions, a massive poll has discovered.

The British public expresses its concerns over finding solutions to the country's ills built up over 14 years of Tory rule but believes that despite the rhetoric of agitators they live in peaceful and friendly communities.

Green entrepreneur Dale Vince, who commissioned anti-extremism group HOPE not hate to undertake the research and has also joined with the TUC to “counter the destructive right-wing narrative”, said he believed the polling was “absolutely essential to set the record straight on “what Britain really thinks.”

He said: “This Giga Poll tells a very different story to the one put out by those on the right who seek to brainwash the public that we’re living in a constant state of fear.

“That’s not the case, and this poll proves that we as a nation are not falling for that fake propaganda.”

The polling - the largest of its kind by breadth and depth of over 45,300 people aged from 16 to over 65 - was undertaken last month and posed 80 questions to a cross-section of the public. The research showed eight in ten people like mixing with people of other ethnicities, religions, and backgrounds. And as for the campaigning slogan launched this summer by Reform UK's Nigel Farage that ‘Britain is lawless,’ some 65% think their local community is peaceful and friendly, with only 11 per cent disagreeing.

News that Britons are not buying into the angry right-wing rhetoric that the country is tearing itself apart will be a source of comfort to Labour and the Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who said following the recent rally organised by far-right extremist Tommy Robinson that the country should never surrender its flag to become a symbol of “violence, fear and division.”

Though the right portrays immigration and asylum as the ‘key issue’ facing Britain, the poll showed that it was only fourth in the list of concerns, with respondents by a clear margin – 56% – saying their Number One concern was the cost-of-living crisis. The state of the NHS was second at 38%, with immigration and asylum at 25%.

What has emerged from the polling is the clearest insight yet into the thinking of the public who feel forgotten, neglected and poorer amidst the noise of right-wing attacks on Sir Keir's leadership.

The ‘silent majority’ – still suffering from the financial impact of the Tory legacy, with Brexit, low growth, the financial crash of 2008 and austerity, thrown into a disastrous mix still felt today – are supportive of a wealth tax with 75% thinking ‘wealthy people are getting richer while poorer people are getting further behind.’ And they are desperate to be heard with 69% of those polled believing the Government should



By Dale Vince  
OBE

YOU feel no one is listening to you, I get that. I feel it too.

I've shown this Government four ways to slash our energy bills, we could halve them at no cost. Nothing has happened.

I also feel we're being told fairytales by right wing media and politicians – about the country we live in, about our fellow citizens, our neighbours and friends and what they care about – I feel disconnected from the picture they paint of our fabulous country.

That's why I commissioned this Giga Poll, so named because it's so much bigger than any poll before it. I wanted to know what Britain really thinks. And guess what, you also feel disconnected from this right-wing narrative. Nigel Farage for all his populist skills is out of touch with the population...that for me is the biggest finding.

Happiness, fairness and compassion live and breathe in our people.

Farage, Britain's very own Donald Trump Mini Me, can stick that in his pipe.

Yes we care about immigration, we want it under control – but we see the value of it too.

The cost of living looms large in our findings, it magnifies my frustration on the energy bill issue. I've been banging on about breaking the link between the price of gas and the price of green energy for years.

Poverty looms large too, so many of us are struggling to pay the bills and face the disarmingly poetic choice between ‘heating and eating’. Luxuries for many

are just a pipe dream. We have choices here too, another thing I've ben banging on about is a wealth tax. And reform of our tax system which is prejudiced towards people that have the most. It would affect me, I would happily pay it. Three-quarters of you see the growing inequality in our country and you agree with me – so strongly that the wealth tax is the third most popular policy Britain wants to see.

Trust is an issue too. We found so many of you don't feel the Government is listening but you trust your local leaders because you know they understand the issues you face and your communities. That's a key finding for me and I'm going to be doing my best in the months to come to get across your views and attitudes at the highest level.

More positivity and more right-wing disconnect is something that you may know has occupied my adult life fighting the climate crisis.

The majority of you get that climate crisis is real and is human made and something we have to tackle.

It's driven by the mass burning of fossil fuels and we're paying a big price now in lives and economic cost. Only one-in-ten Brits still believe it's not us humans “wot did it”.

And in further good news just over half the country believes we must get to Net Zero. I hear the other half who think it is too costly but that's the recent gaslighting of Reform at work – it's not the true picture.

Net Zero will give us cheaper energy and energy independence and economic strength through freedom from the rollercoaster of global fossil fuel pricing. It's not all about the climate.

My hope – and we all need hope – is that your views and attitudes, expressed through this massive poll will help shape the future of our country. It needs to start with Government, they have the levers of power – and they need to start by listening.

The Britain I know and love, has a strong beating heart.

Our Giga Poll says so.

“  
**This poll proves that we as a nation are not falling for fake propaganda**”

DALE VINCE

trial new ways of involving the public in decision making such as citizens' assemblies or online debates.

And showing the clear win that would result from such an initiative, the polling shows Nigel Farage is failing in the toxicity he has sought to inflict on Britain's bid to become energy in-

dependent with sustainable green energy – with six-in ten people thinking “climate change poses a threat to the future

well-being of me and my family.” Only 13% disagree. Even the controversial push towards Net Zero has a majority favouring the ambition, with 51% buying in to the bigger picture by agreeing that for the sake of the planet we have no choice but to move to Net Zero by 2050.

The Government needs to do more to win the economic argument with 49% saying the cost is too much and we should slow the process.

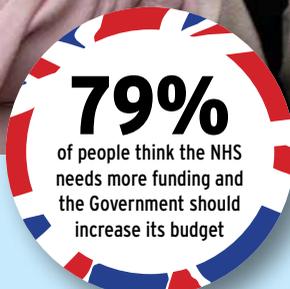
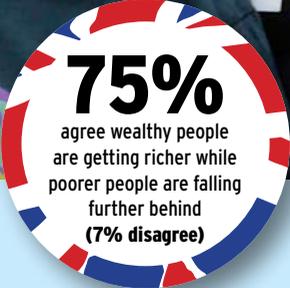
Nearly eight-in-ten think big business should pay more to meet emission targets and provide environmental protections.

What emerges strongly from the poll is the public wants

# this for Britain

**ON THE MARCH TO CHANGE:**

Actress Emma Thompson and former Green party leader Caroline Lucas join Dale Vince at a protest in London



## WEALTH

- **39%** support the introduction of a new tax for the wealthiest people in the UK (third most popular issue out of 19 options)
- **25%** of people think their personal finances will get better over the next five years, however **42%** think that they will get worse



## NHS

- **21%** say NHS costs are going up too much and we should move to an insurance-style system
- Doctors (**67%**) and nurses (**59%**) were the most trusted professions - just **5%** support politicians



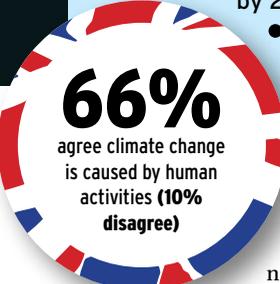
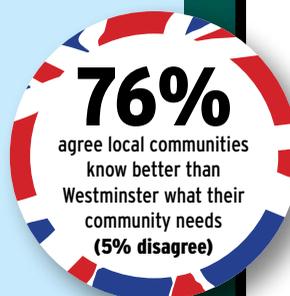
## CLIMATE

- **61%** agree climate change poses a threat to the future well-being of themselves and their family (**13%** disagree)
- **75%** agree big business should have to pay for emissions reduction and environmental protection in line with their impact (**6%** disagree)
- **51%** think we have no choice but to move to Net Zero by 2050 to save the planet but **49%** think the economic impact of achieving Net Zero by 2050 is too much and we should have less ambitious targets
  - When asked how weather and climate conditions will change over the next five years in the UK, **53%** believe they will get worse where as only **15%** believe they will get better



## COMMUNITY POWER AND DEMOCRACY

- **63%** agree councils should have more power to deviate from national rules to meet the needs of their communities (**9%** disagree)
- **69%** want the Government to trial new ways of involving the public in decision making, such as citizens' assemblies or online debates (**7%** disagree)



decisive action to protect not just their interests, but those of their communities, and gives a clear signal to the PM to be stronger and more

radical in pushing through policies. Top of Britain's contempt for those perceived to be failing the country are the water companies with nearly half the public recognising the issue as a priority and demanding greater regulation to clean up

our waterways. On Nigel Farage, one in three respondents have a positive opinion of him, but more people dislike him (43%). On the employment front, four in ten people fear their jobs could be replaced by Artificial Intelligence.

*The Giga Poll was commissioned by Ecotricity. It was conducted by Focaldata on behalf of Ecotricity and HOPE not hate. The survey was conducted between 1st August and 11th September 2025 with a sample of 45,335.*

## How people would vote in a General Election - results are in from the Giga Poll

**LABOUR 23.2% CON 18.3% REFORM 29.3%**  
**GREEN 8.5% LD 12.2%**

**Rich are getting richer and poor are suffering... it needs to stop**

**A TOP priority of the British people is for Keir Starmer to impose a wealth tax on the richest in our society.**

The Government has resisted increasing calls to raise taxes on the super-rich as a way of boosting the Treasury's coffers and balancing the books.

But in what has been dubbed the Giga Poll – the sounding out of more than 45,000 people on the issue – it was the third most popular demand of the public.

Three quarters of those polled say wealthy people are getting richer while poorer people are falling further behind. Only 7% disagree.

And four out of ten Britons when asked to vote on the issues they most cared about said a new wealth tax was top of their priority list.

Green entrepreneur Dale Vince, who commissioned the poll, and who has actively called for himself and others to be taxed more, said he wanted the wealth tax question to be put to the widest possible number of people.

"I'm delighted that myself, and other campaigners, have been vindicated by the public's support to get the rich – and that includes myself – taxed more.

"We've a massive hole in the public finances and it needs to be resolved by those with the deepest pockets paying their fair share of taxes."

Vince, one of Britain's biggest taxpayers, has called for a tax of 2% on assets of more than £10million that would generate £24billion a year and would impact only 20,000 people.

He added: "If millionaires don't want to pay up, they should go. I think there's an imbalance in our tax system.

"The more money you have the less tax you pay. I think that's wrong. We have extreme poverty in our country.

"Our tax system was written by rich people for rich people."

Fears that public spending will be slashed across Whitehall departments have increased as Chancellor Rachel Reeves' fiscal headroom has become tighter.

Depressingly grim reading for the Government will be how desperate people feel about the state of their personal finances.

Four-in-ten people think they will get worse with only one-in-four believing they will get better.

A shocking statistic from the polling is how many people feel their daily lives are impacted by their struggle to pay the bills – and

# WEALTH TAX: That's what Britain wants

## Case Study

### CARE WORKER SAM'S BATTLE TO SURVIVE ON POOR PAY

**I'VE worked in social care for 35 years. It's more than a job to me. It's the chance to make a difference to the lives of the most vulnerable.**

**I've supported adults with complex needs through highs and lows - providing personal care, medication, help with day-to-day activities and emotional support.**

**When I started in 1990 my wages were good. But pay and conditions in social care have declined**

**steeply since then. This has taken a real toll. I've gone from comfortably feeding my family to counting items in the trolley. Haircuts and days out require extra shifts.**

**Low pay and insecurity isn't just bad for social care staff, it's bad for those we care for.**

**With an ageing population we can't afford to lose a single care worker yet people are leaving the sector in droves for better-paid jobs elsewhere.**

**That's why Labour's Make Work Pay agenda is so important. As part of the employment rights reforms, there will be a landmark deal for social care that will provide the fair pay, better conditions and dignity care workers deserve. It can't come soon enough.**



**REAL TOLL: Sam forced to do extra shifts for treats**



**14.3m**  
people were living  
in poverty in the  
UK in 2022-23

are tragically forced to skip meals.

Nine per cent feel financially desperate with people polled saying: "I currently cannot afford essentials such as food,

rent or mortgage. I am already taking extreme measures such as skipping meals or missing rent payments."

And 25% feel worried about their financial future, explaining: "I'm currently keeping up with essential payments, but I fear I won't be able to soon if things continue as they are. I cannot afford luxuries now."

Thirty per cent feel like "I'm getting by but making cutbacks – I can afford the essentials but I'm having to cut back on luxu-

ries and the things that make life enjoyable."

Twenty-nine per cent feel comfortable: "I have enough money to afford essentials and save for a rainy day, and I can enjoy some luxuries, if I'm careful with my budget."

And five per cent feel well-off: "I don't need to worry about money, I can usually afford both essentials and luxuries, and save money" – with 2% preferring not to say.

Lawyer and philanthropist Julia Davies, member of the Patriotic Millionaires UK (PMUK) network, said: "Everyone deserves to live decent lives – not just the wealthiest few. Working people have paid their fair share for long enough, now it's time for the super-rich to step up and start contributing properly to the society

that made their wealth possible." Stephen Kinsella, also a member of PMUK, said: "Our country is crumbling while the wealth of a few increases. We all know the system is designed by and for the very rich and that has to change. Why would the Government resist such a necessary and popular measure? We need a wealth tax now."

And Phil White, PMUK member, added: "A wealth tax is the patriotic thing our country is crying out for.

"It would raise £24billion a year to fix our economy and public services, give the next generation a better future and show that the wealthy are prepared to do their bit. Forget painting flags on roundabouts, this is what will unite our kingdom."



BY GORDON BROWN

# Cut poverty to make life fairer for millions

IN the last 15 years, the number of foodbanks have rocketed from 35 to 2,600. This nationwide explosion in emergency food aid has been followed by the opening of bedding banks, hygiene banks, clothes banks, furnishing banks and baby.

As charities have replaced universal credit as the last line of defence against poverty, over the last three years have seen the creation of The Multibank, which takes a holistic view of the needs of a family and tries to offer not just a safety net, but by relieving household material poverty, a springboard for raising children out of poverty.

Today one million UK children are living in near destitution, lacking either shelter, food or basic essentials. Two million children are in homes without a washing machine, cooker or fridge and will rarely eat freshly cooked or hot food. Three million children are skipping meals and 4.5million of them are officially in poverty.

How millions have suffered as a result of a decade-and-a-half of Tory rule is laid bare by today's poll. It shows how shameful Tory policies have systemically impoverished families and denied the malicious child poverty creation consequence of their two child only benefit rule, which has caused continued and enduring impoverishment of families with more than two children.

So it is no surprise to those of us working to combat poverty in Britain that 9% of us feel financially desperate, unable to afford essentials such as food or rent. Three million children are subject to extreme hardship such as skipping meals and parents missing rent payments.

Also causes for concern are:

- the 25% of us - more than



**EMERGENCY FOOD:** Demand has soared for foodbanks across the UK

14million UK adults - who feel worried about their financial future and are unable to plan ahead because they can't afford basic essentials.

- the 30% of us - about 17million - who are having to cut back on everything other than the basic necessities of life.

- the 29% of us - around 16.5million - who are just about managing to set something aside for a rainy day, knowing it means being extra careful managing the

weekly budget. So as the Giga Poll shows, people are now placing their faith in the Child Poverty Review, commissioned to their credit by Keir Starmer and Rachel Reeves after last year's election. It is soon due to report with recommendations to ease family poverty and millions of families know this is our best chance of making Britain a fairer place.

*Former Prime Minister Gordon Brown is also President of The Multibank charity*

# Time to give workers the rights they truly deserve



BY PAUL NOWAK  
TUC General Secretary

FOR too long, our economy has been rigged against working people - with ordinary workers shouldering all the risks while dodgy bosses take the rewards.

Right now, over four million people - one in eight workers - are stuck in insecure jobs. No stable hours. No sick pay. No safety net. Just constant uncertainty and the daily grind of trying to make ends meet without any control over your future, your time, or your dignity. These aren't just numbers - they're people.

A mum skipping meals to make rent. A young worker waiting by the phone for a shift that may never come. A carer forced to choose between going in sick or losing a day's pay.

This isn't just bad for workers. It's bad for our country. Economic insecurity seeps into every part of life - straining families, fracturing communities and fuelling distrust in our democracy.

It creates resentment, anxiety and a sense of powerlessness. But we have a chance to change that.

The Employment Rights Bill now in Parliament is a landmark step forward. It would ban exploitative zero-hours contracts, outlaw the disgraceful practice of "fire and rehire," and protect workers from unfair dismissal.

As the poll shows, it's supported across the political spectrum - especially among Reform-leaning voters.

This is a moment for leadership. For ministers to go out and champion this change. Because while Nigel Farage likes to pose as a workers' friend, he told his MPs to vote against this Bill and against stronger protections for millions of working people.

Let's make sure no one forgets that. The labour movement - unions and Government - is strongest when it's bold and ambitious.

That means strengthening rights at work, taxing wealth fairly and investing in secure, decent jobs everywhere. That's what real change looks like. Working people have waited long enough. Let's deliver it.



**FAIR PLAY:** Wealth tax is the answer says Dale Vince

# WHY YOU SHOULD TAX ME MORE

BY DALE VINCE OBE

TAX the rich and start with me - I'm one of the top 100 tax payers in Britain by the way.

I don't use offshore holdings, shell companies or trusts to avoid tax. I think people like me should pay more. That's not something you hear often - it's not something Farage can say.

Millions of people in our country live in poverty, struggling with the cost of living. While a few thousand people have unimaginable wealth.

Our tax system is prejudiced. If you

can invest money to make money your tax rate will be half as big as if you make money in a job. That's an outrage.

Our Giga Poll shows that 75% of Brits think this is an issue and a wealth tax is an answer.

A tiny 2% tax on wealth above £10million would affect only 20,000 people but would raise £24billion a year.

Imagine what we could fund with this...the two child benefit cap? No problem - and £22billion left in change.

We need to reform our tax system - and that friends is something Farage and Reform will not call for.

# Climate change: The fear IS real

**WILD and unscientific claims on climate change by Reform's Nigel Farage have been slapped down in the ground-breaking survey.**

Two-thirds of people questioned for the Giga Poll said global warming is man-made.

The research shows how most Britons don't believe Farage's Flat Earth nonsense. And they are worried too – 6 in 10 say the climate crisis threatens their future and their families.

But Labour still has an uphill struggle convincing the public that Net Zero is good for the economy and will save money.

While 51% back hitting Net Zero by 2050 as essential for life on Earth, nearly half of voters think it is too expensive – and want to reduce the ambitious climate targets.

That is understandable when we have powerful right-wing media barons acting like a loudspeaker for the Conservatives and Reform blasting out their dodgy claims that Net Zero is a burden on the economy.

Labour's challenge is clear: if they want to lead the green transition, they need to show it is good for our wallets, good for jobs and good for the planet.

Dale Vince, who commissioned the Giga Poll and is also the founder of Ecotricity and a long-time champion of fairer energy, says the answer is simple: Break the "utterly mad" link that ties the price of cheap, homegrown green energy to sky-high international gas prices.

This one fix could bring costs down and help Labour meet its goal of cutting energy bills by up to £300 by 2030.

In 2023 alone, keeping green energy tied to gas prices cost the UK £43bn – that is £30bn blown for British businesses and £13bn for households. The average home could have saved nearly £400 on energy bills.

And it's not just families feeling the brunt – high energy costs are killing off UK industry with British Steel a prime example.

How much more damage do we need before someone finally fixes this? Nigel Farage claims Net Zero is killing the steel

**66%**  
of people say  
global warming is  
caused by humans

**51%**  
back Net Zero  
...but say it is  
too expensive

## A society worth fighting for...

BY NICK LOWLES CEO OF HOPE NOT HATE

SCROLL through social media and it is easy to believe that the British people dislike all immigrants and resent their presence in the UK, but that is not what the largest ever poll suggests.

In findings that may surprise many, the majority of British people believe immigration has been good for the country, that we need immigration for our economy and overwhelmingly enjoy living in a society with people of different cultures and religions.

While many have some concerns the system is being cheated and anxieties over the impact

of immigration on public services, people also strongly believe many of our public services could not cope without people coming here to work. Almost three-quarters of British people support managed migration into the UK, with only a quarter believing it should be halted until the economy improves or want it stopped altogether.

The poll reveals how people are happy to live in a multicultural society and 79% enjoy mixing with people of different cultures and religions. By a margin of three to one, the public would support local campaigns to promote multiculturalism and initiatives that brought communities together.

Our Giga Poll reflects a far more nuanced opinion on immigration and cohesion than the media and political narrative often suggests. People want the country to have control of its borders, but they also value newcomers who contribute so much to society. Politicians should take heed from our poll and put their trust in the British people who want our multicultural society to work and our leaders to ensure it does.

## Integration is for our nation

BY ENVER SOLOMON CEO OF REFUGEE COUNCIL

THE poll proves what we know to be true: British people believe in multi-culturalism, integration and community. All we want is to live in a peaceful and friendly environment, with good schools and healthcare.

We care about the people around us, like our neighbours, friends and colleagues, no matter where in the world they come from.

But this goodwill is being threatened by toxic narratives around immigration that do not represent us. Fear and division have been spreading across our country, fuelled by misinformation. This rhetoric doesn't make

our streets safer. It simply dehumanises people who have survived war and persecution, many of whom are survivors of violence.

People are pessimistic about how unified we can be as a country because of this rhetoric. But this rise in hatred isn't who we are as a country. Our frontline teams work every day with men, women and children seeking to rebuild their lives in safety.

A number of these stood alongside our troops in Afghanistan or fled terror in Sudan. They want to move into proper housing, start work or training, and begin contributing to communities here in the UK. With proper reform, our asylum system can deliver on these vital values of fairness and compassion. But the Government must also respond to the public's concerns about the rise of intolerance.

We know that there's a demand for work that promotes Britain's multicultural society and help people from different backgrounds connect.

It is time to take action to bring unity to some of our most divided communities.

industry, the opposite is true. It is the price of fossil fuels that makes energy the most expensive in Europe. And that is a huge cost to business.

It's not just about putting more money in people's pockets - embracing Net Zero is also the economic opportunity of the century.

According to the Confederation of

British Industry (CBI) the green economy supports one million jobs.

Farage's war on Net Zero would wipe out livelihoods across the North of England. Reform UK might be sailing high in the polls but once people realise its policy to scrap Net Zero would be a disaster for the economy and jobs, their ratings look deemed to plummet. Investing in the green

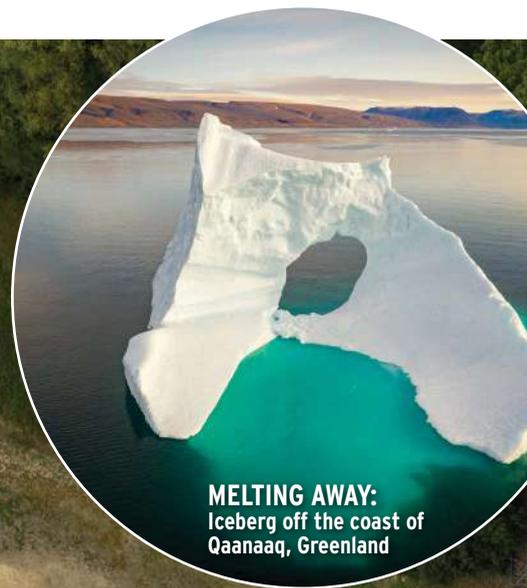
technologies of the future is how Britain is going to build wealth and growth.

The UK's green economy grew 9% in 2023, compared to 0.1% growth in the rest of the economy and green growth could deliver a GDP boost of up to £57bn a year by 2030, according to the CBI.

So, it is time for Labour to take the fight to Reform and make the case for the



**LEFT HIGH & DRY:**  
Ardingly Reservoir in West Sussex has just six weeks of water left



**MELTING AWAY:**  
Iceberg off the coast of Qaanaaq, Greenland

## Listen to the truth NOT all the lies



BY CHRIS PACKHAM

I THINK climate change denial should be illegal. That's how dangerous it is. Freedom of speech is imperative but we have established limits to protect people's rights in terms of race, religion etc.

When it comes to the calculated lies and propaganda espoused by lobbyists for the fossil fuel and other industries with vested interests in bad business, as usual nothing could be more dangerous. Their lies potentially threaten all life on earth. We should all have a fundamental right to the truth. The truth is we are warming the planet at a catastrophic rate and unless we decelerate immediately our species has no secure future on earth.

To resist is reckless and irresponsible. But it happens every day. Fully paid-up liars pedal misinformation and undermine those who attempt to communicate the truth. Science, independent, vetted and published science is where we should go for facts – not the corrupt politicians, despicable 'think tanks', their lackeys, trolls and bots. Their contrived and careless talk could cost billions of lives.

All this sounds alarming but all is not lost if we act quickly. For a start we have to keep the fossil fuels in the ground and move towards a plant-based diet. The biggest issues are burning oil, coal and gas and animal agriculture. But we don't have to stop flying and driving or freeze in our homes. That's the myth the climate liars like to promote. And we don't have to starve either.

We have abilities and technologies ready to roll, renewable energies work, we can make healthy and nutritious food from grass, cutting out the cow, and all the associated ills of poor welfare and environmental destruction. Investing in these opportunities is where we should be going now.

And if our Government doesn't move fast enough we should peacefully complain and just make the right choices ourselves. We can and must make the difference and we can all start by outing the liars and listening to the truth.



**RAGING:**  
Wildfires in north Yorkshire

green economy. It's time to fight back against Reform, the party of conspiracy theories, Net Zero lies and fantasy economics. The truth is we can't afford to ditch Net Zero and Labour must persuade voters that we are on the brink of a new industrial revolution.

A revolution that will slash your energy bills, create jobs and help the planet in the process. What's not to like.

## Brexit? Now it's Next threatening all our futures

BY DALE VINCE OBE

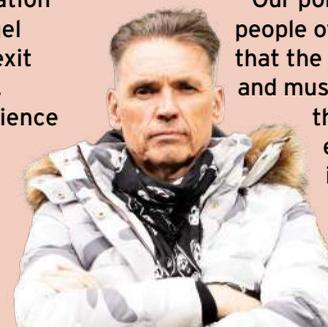
THE big mouthed, beer swilling, chain smoking bloke who brought us Brexit is working on a sequel. Britain's exit from Net Zero – we should call it Next. While Brexit was an economic

disaster, our economy lost over £100bn, promised trade deals never came – worst perhaps, taking back control led to immigration doubling. Nothing Nigel Farage said about Brexit turned out to be true.

Against that experience we should judge his latest claims – that we can't afford Net Zero, that we need to drill for oil not build windmills and so

on. Next will make Brexit look like a paper cut economically – if we allow him to get away with it.

Our polling shows that the British people overwhelmingly believe that the climate crisis is manmade and must be tackled. Net Zero is the gateway to the green economy. The economic and industrial opportunity of the century. Turning our backs on that would make Brexit's economic harm look and feel like a paper cut.



BY ROS WYNNE-JONES

WHEN community leader Sacha Bedding sent me some photographs he'd taken of the Dyke House estate in Hartlepool at first I thought they were of a riot. Union flags hung outside a church, but it was the woman holding a red flare who caught my eye.

I had just returned from reporting on the protests at the Bell Hotel in Epping – 2025 has been the summer of flags and I'd seen enough for one day. Then I noticed the child in the Union flag bowler hat and the trestle tables, and realised Sacha was sending a positive image.

"That was our Jubilee Street Party," Sacha told me. "More than 300 people having a great time. It was such a good day!"

Sacha had predicted the 2024 riots stemming

from misinformation following the terrible murders of three little girls in Southport. "I said if something doesn't change there will be civil disorder in this country – it's inevitable," the Wharton Trust CEO remembers. "I felt we were just waiting for it. A result of the pressures that people are living under, added to a lack of control over their lives."

But he also wanted to tell me something else. That given some say over their lives and some faith back in society, people in Dyke House just wanted what everyone else wants – safety, security and friendship.

"When people feel ignored, neglected, and shut out, frustration builds – and history shows us the terrible consequences," Sacha told me. "In order to fix the foundations of our democracy, we must act

boldly and do things differently. That means putting real power and real resources in the hands of local people. Not promises. Not gestures. Real Power."

In the summer of flags, many of the protests were driven by far-right groups and people with extreme agendas hijacking genuine community concerns.

They have made people of colour and people from immigrant communities feel understandably afraid, and even unwelcome.

But it's also true that in the absence of real power putting up flags became a way for people to exercise some control over space they feel they have lost. The antidote to that is real power put back into the hands of communities. And to reclaim our national flags, because they belong to all of us.

# We are a nation of neighbours

POSITIVE LIGHT: Street party fun in Hartlepool



PICTURE: SACHA BEDDING

**ALMOST two miles from the ACC conference centre on the Liverpool Docks where the Labour faithful are gathering this week, is an old Victorian presbytery which acts as a hub for the local refugee community.**

On August 5th last year, Asylum Link Merseyside, in Toxteth, had to board up its windows after becoming the focus of far-right protesters during a summer of riots that set city centres alight.

The refugees and people seeking asylum and sanctuary at the centre had nothing to do with the horrific murders of three little girls 20 miles north in Southport, but they became the focus of public anger.

"People we know were spat at, called horrible names," explains Emma Leaper, National Coordinator at the charity. "Somebody from our community was attacked," she added.

But even as staff were boarding up the windows, locking the doors and trying to secure records inside the building, they looked out and saw something incredible – thousands of people converging on the building with placards declaring love



BY ROS WYNNE-JONES  
Daily Mirror columnist

and support. "Thousands of people came together in the city and actually came to protect the building the night that the fascists were going to come and attack us," Emma says.

Now the boards that were used to seal the building have been painted by refugee art groups and are proudly displayed as messages of hope and support. "There is more love than hate, in this city," says Emma.

For the last 12 months, the Mirror 'Real Britain' team – including Claire Donnelly and the film-maker John Domokos – has been out across the country, talking to communities in the aftermath of last year's riots for a special video series called 'Island of Strangers'.

The Giga Poll shows the lessons we have learned. Most people love their communities and consider them peaceful and friendly. Only 16 per cent would not want to know their neighbours better.

Two thirds of people (67%) believe the Government should do more to improve community cohesion in some of the most divided communities – and 48% would support a local campaign to promote Britain's multicultural society and help people from different backgrounds connect.

Since the Southport riots and beyond, we have allowed a small minority of Britons – and powerful voices from abroad – to loudly define who we are as a country. Politicians have weakly ceded ground to the far right and Reform UK whose only plan is division.

Working class communities are tired of being demonised and characterised as hostile and racist. The British working class has been multi-ethnic for centuries. Every corner of our country has been shaped by waves of immigration.

These communities are in trouble. Spending time in some of Britain's poorest places makes it easy to understand people's anger and lack of faith in politicians, as the broken carcasses of their once proud industries loom over a lack of progress in modern times.

But deep down, most people know

immigrants are not the problem – these are places which need real solutions not fascist snake oil. They need power put back into the hands of the community – Labour solutions, if only Labour would govern as itself.

We hope that our 'Island of Strangers' films – shown over the weekend at the Labour Conference, and across the Mersey at Future Yard in Birkenhead – give a voice back to real Britain.

On the St Mellons estate in Cardiff, we found over-60s from a mainly white Welsh community enjoying music and entertainment from people of all backgrounds – black, brown and LGBTQ. In Stockton-on-Tees people from the local refugee community were helping create a beautiful garden in an area plagued by anti-social behaviour.

A year later, we can definitely report that we're not an island of strangers – far from it. We're a nation of neighbours. This is our Britain: friendship, community, solidarity. And we want our country back.

Follow the films on YouTube, the Mirror site and on social media using #IslandOfStrangers