

FAIR RULES FOR STRONG COMMUNITIES



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PRIME MINISTER'S FOREWORD



**THE RT HON
GORDON BROWN MP**
PRIME MINISTER

Our society is strong when communities are strong. But strong communities are tied together by fair rules. Rules that express the values we share. Not rigid, inflexible, inherited rules that fail to adapt to the challenges and realities of this unique time – but rules shaped by all and applied to all; sustained by respect and enforced through clear sanctions against those who break them.

Fair rules that apply to all and the strong communities they help create are never more important than at a time of national challenge.

We cannot pretend there is an easy, do nothing way to meet the difficult challenges ahead.

Our view is clear. Government must act, not leave families and businesses to face the pressures of the downturn. If we don't act now the downturn will be deeper. Local businesses will needlessly go to the wall and jobs that could have been saved will be lost.

That means providing real help for families and businesses now, when they need it.

But it also means taking action to ensure our communities are strong. Stronger communities, quite simply, will help our country come through these times faster and stronger.

So as Government takes action, we expect people to play their part in return, with clear consequences for those who do not. In a fair society that is what people would expect.

In Britain, we have always believed there can never be one rule for some, and another rule for others. Rules must apply to individuals, communities and businesses alike.

From crime to welfare to immigration to business, every aspect of our society needs to reflect these rules. Fair rules are the basis of trust in society and they give people greater confidence that their contribution will be valued and recognised.

That is why we are reforming the financial system to reward hard work and responsible risk-taking, but not irresponsibility.

We expect business to help make communities safe, strong and vibrant places to live and work. Businesses must employ fairly, and make sure that executive rewards reflect real performance.

It is why we expect people to work if they can, and access help and support if they can't. We will continue to improve the support for those in need of help in getting their next job, and for those who cannot work.

But those who are fit for work are expected to work. And those who cheat the system will not be warned, but punished the first time they are caught. Fair rules mean a level playing field for all, with no exceptions. If you won't contribute to our society, and fail to play by its rules, then you can't expect to be supported by it.

It is why we will continue to take tough action on crime, backing people who do the right thing with a new independent commissioner who will stand up for victims, witnesses and their families.

There will be more neighbourhood policing – with police responding directly to the needs of the community, and national standards setting out what people can

expect from their local team. And criminals who break the rules will give back to society through Community Payback which will be what it says; hard work for public benefit at the places and times the public can see it. Justice seen is justice done.

To help, we will increase funding for out of school, community facilities and activities, and intensive personal support for families in severe difficulty.

But for those young people who continue to break the rules we will ensure the police, courts and local authorities make full use of the powers available to them – combining tough enforcement of the rules with a strong emphasis on preventing unacceptable behaviour in the first place.

Equally, we welcome those we need who have something to offer our country's future. But, migrants who break the rules will be sent home. And a new migrant charge will contribute to the public services in areas dealing with changes in the population.

The Australian-style points system for economic immigrants will make sure that only those who can contribute can come in.

Britain must face these challenging economic times with a new common purpose and unity. Fair rules in a fair society will ensure active support for all those who are prepared to play their part; they will give people a fair say in the decision-making process; and – in the interests of fairness – they will send a clear message that anyone who does not play by the rules will face the full consequences.



The Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP
Prime Minister

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FAIR RULES FOR STRONG COMMUNITIES

Britain is now facing a sharp global economic downturn. The Government is taking action to support the economy right now, to help families and businesses through the tough times ahead. But government action alone is not enough. Everyone has to play their part, both in the economy and in wider society. When people pull together communities get stronger. When communities are strong, so is our society as a whole. When our society is strong, it is easier for individuals, families and businesses to flourish – now, and for the long term.

Fair rules level the playing field for everyone – they set the conditions that enable everyone to have their say and play their part, with clear consequences for those who do not play by the rules. They apply to every one: individuals, public services, small businesses, large corporations and banks. And they provide the platform on which every one can thrive. That is why fair rules are so vital now.

This requires a concerted and coordinated effort across a range of departments' policy areas, working closely with the devolved

administrations where they have responsibility. Major steps being taken by government to promote and maintain fair rules in key areas include:

WELFARE REFORM...

- a new **'one strike'** rule for benefit cheats. Government will reinforce the existing two strike rule with a penalty for first time benefit fraud offenders under which they can expect to lose their benefits for four weeks
- a **tiered system for those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)**. Claimants who have been on JSA for several months will have to accept any suitable employment that is offered to them. After six months they will be allocated a personal adviser and have to agree to a demanding programme to improve their employability
- a requirement that from October 2010 lone parents with a youngest child aged seven or over will **no longer be entitled to Income Support solely on the grounds of being a lone parent**, instead those able to work may claim JSA
- piloting **Voice Risk Analysis** technology to help assess whether a benefit claimant is providing misleading information.

CRIME AND POLICING...

- a tougher **community payback scheme**. Offenders will wear a uniform and undertake hard community work for several hours a day, with communities themselves directly identifying local projects
- a new **Victims' Commissioner** to give victims and witnesses a stronger voice in the justice system, protecting their interests and ensuring fair treatment
- steps to **support people who do the right thing**, including a £5m Community Crime Fighters programme to train 3,600 members of the public who are already active in their communities and want to do more to make them safer
- ensuring that public sector workers and other **authority figures are empowered and supported in upholding fair rules**. We have already given new powers to teachers, for example to search pupils. Assaulting someone who is providing a public service is now an aggravating factor that may lead to a tougher sentence. We will go further.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE...

- supporting young people to play by the rules by **increasing funding for out of school community facilities and activities** – making sure that kids have things to do, especially on weekend nights
- **more Family Intervention Projects** to provide intensive personal support to 20,000 families in severe difficulty by 2011 to help them get back on track
- a joined-up Youth Crime Action Plan to **deal with that small minority of young people who break the rules**. This combines tough enforcement with earlier and better prevention, and non-negotiable support for those who need it most.

BUSINESSES AND TOWN CENTRES...

- **reclassifying lap dancing clubs as 'sex establishments'** to allow councils to take into account a wider range of local concerns
- considering proposals to create **a new code for alcohol retailers** including a mix of mandatory national conditions for all retailers, such as limits on 'all you can drink' promotions, and locally targeted conditions on 'problem retailers'

- working with local authorities to **make it easier for local people to register their concerns about irresponsible and illegal alcohol sales**
- ensuring that local communities and their authorities have sufficient **powers to prevent the clustering of betting shops** in areas where this is a problem
- a new push to ensure that **credit card companies treat customers fairly** in these difficult economic times.

IMMIGRATION...

- a new requirement that from April 2009, **migrants contribute directly towards a new fund** that will help local service providers deal with the short-term pressures of migration
- reforms to the immigration system, including a new selective **points-based system** to ensure Britain attracts economic migrants who have the skills our economy needs – and no more

- enforcing **strict penalties against immigrants or their employers if they break the rules**, including the establishment of new partnerships between local authorities and enforcement agencies to gather intelligence, disrupt illegal activity and track down immigration offenders and failed asylum seekers.

EMPOWERMENT...

- ensuring people have a fair say in determining the rules by **placing duties on all local authorities to promote democratic understanding and participation and respond to petitions**, and **extending the recently introduced 'duty to involve'** to a wider range of agencies in local communities
- enhancing the ability of community representatives to hold councils to account, **ensuring swift and fair redress** for poor services
- giving people a greater say over their local police, including the introduction of **directly elected policing representatives**.

CHAPTER 1

STRONG BRITAIN

**BRITAIN IS ENTERING CHALLENGING TIMES,
BUT IT DOES SO FROM A STRONG POSITION.
WE ARE A TOUGH AND PROUD SOCIETY THAT
BELIEVES IN PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND
THE COMMON GOOD.**



1. Countries are defined by many things: geography, economy, history, politics, demography; but societies are usually defined by their values, the common norms and accepted rules that hold a group of people together. A healthy society needs a shared set of values and rules. It needs enforcement and respect for those rules, and it needs ways to sustain and refresh those rules over time.

WHY STRONG RULES ARE SO IMPORTANT TODAY

2. These are very difficult times in the global economy. The past year has seen two major shocks that have come from abroad: from America, the worst global financial crisis for generations; and from around the world, the record surge in energy and food prices.

3. These global shocks are unprecedented in their scope, scale and coincidence, and they are affecting the daily lives of businesses and families – their homes and their jobs – in all major economies. These twin shocks have hit every economy in the world, including here in the UK.

4. Faced with these challenges, the Government has taken decisive action to manage the economy, to offer real help to get people through tough times, and to invest in success when the upturn comes. But government action alone is not enough. Everyone has to play their part. We can only tackle the problems we face if we succeed in sustaining and strengthening our shared values and uniting around a common set of rules. When people pull together communities get stronger. When communities are strong, so is our society as a whole. When our society is strong, it is easier for individuals, families and businesses to flourish – now, and for the long term.

STRONG, SHARED VALUES

5. Britons together must face these challenging times with a new degree of unity. Our core beliefs must work to unite us and not divide us. Britain goes into this period starting from a strong position. People are proud to be British¹; we believe in looking after the interests of the community as a whole as opposed to the individual²; we believe in our own resilience³; and we enjoy learning and developing our talents⁴ to meet new challenges.

6. In other words, we are a tough and proud society that believes in personal responsibility and the common good.

7. These qualities are rooted in a sense of decency and fairness, which we demonstrate in a million small ways every day – through volunteering, making donations to charity, respecting queues or giving up our seat for someone who needs it more⁵. Indeed, research suggests that the vast majority of people, irrespective of age, sex, and race find breaches of our shared values – from general disrespect and bad manners⁶ to racism, violence or vandalism – completely unacceptable⁷.

8. Today's challenges demand that we strengthen this foundation, especially where there is concern about shared values. Even where this concern is not well founded it can

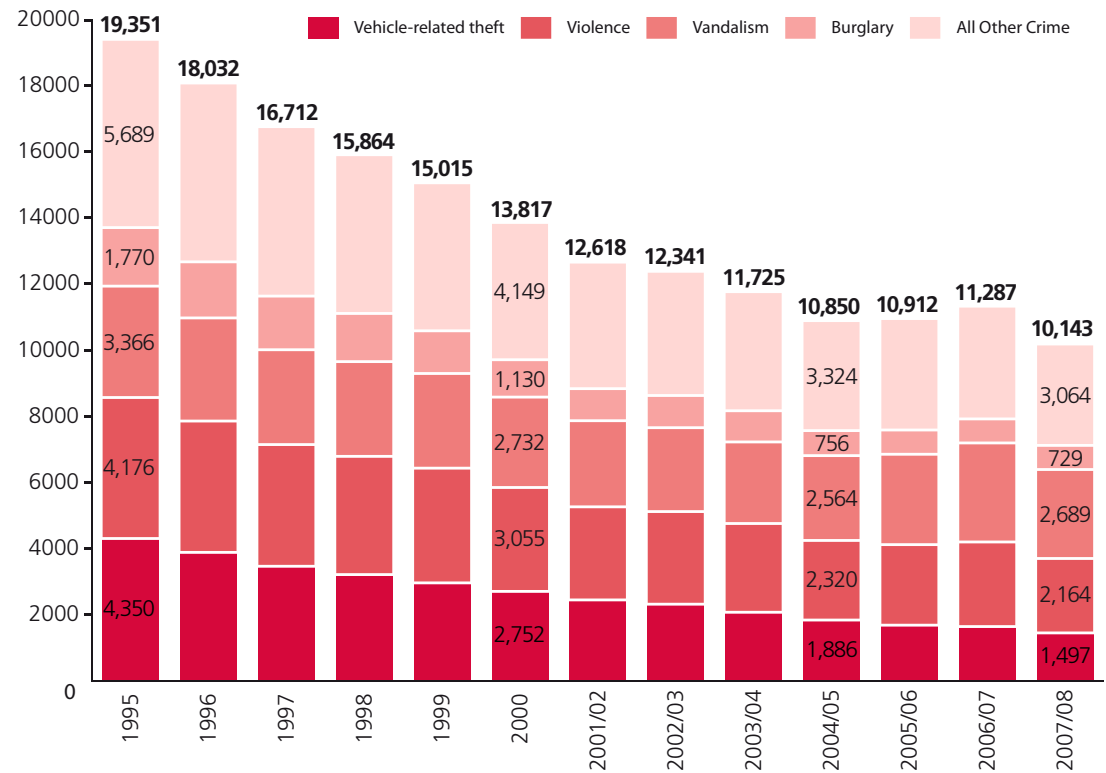
be damaging. One example is immigration. People are worried about the effect that immigration is having on the nation as a whole – even if that worry does not seem to be based on their personal experience. Seventy per cent of people believe there are too many migrants in Britain; only 27 per cent agree that the rich diversity of cultures and values are a good thing⁸; but by contrast our personal experiences are positive – 82 per cent of us agree that in our local area people from different backgrounds get on well together⁹.

9. A second example is young people's behaviour. The vast majority of young people are well behaved, know exactly what is expected of them and contribute positively to society. Only a small minority of young people – just five per cent – commits more than half of all youth crime¹⁰. Yet 84 per cent of people believe young people have too much freedom and not enough discipline¹¹.

RESPECT FOR FAIR RULES

10. Shared values and rules only make for a strong society if those rules and values are honoured. That means people must obey the law, respect one another's rights and behave decently to neighbours and fellow citizens. These rules apply to people and businesses alike. Here again the evidence points to considerable strength in British society.

Figure 1: Trends in Crime



Source: British Crime Survey

11. Over the last 10 years Britain has become a more law abiding nation. Overall crime as measured by the British Crime Survey, the only consistent measure over 25 years, has fallen by a third since 1997, with some crime types including burglary and car crime down by more than half¹². Contrary to popular perception, gun crime has not increased, and while there are problems with knife crime in some of our cities which we are working together to tackle, overall

violence has fallen by 40 per cent¹³. The decline in crime, moreover, is having a positive impact on people's sense of security. The proportion of people who believe that crime is rising in their local area has fallen from 55 per cent in 1996 to 45 per cent in 2003/4 to only 39 per cent this year¹⁴. The proportion of people saying they feel unsafe walking in the dark in their area and the proportion worried about anti-social behaviour in their local area have also declined¹⁵.

12. Understandably, the law abiding majority still worries about crime, and many believe that crime is rising. The percentage of people perceiving that crime has increased at a national level has remained relatively high at around 65 per cent¹⁶. There are many reasons offered for the size of this perception gap. Some argue it is driven by focused attention on important but geographically concentrated problems such as the blight of knives, guns, gang violence and street robbery. In 2007-08, just three police forces – the Metropolitan Police, Greater Manchester and West Midlands – recorded 62 per cent of robberies in England and Wales¹⁷. In these areas, crimes were significantly concentrated in poorer urban areas among males aged 16-24¹⁸. Some argue that these problems and other problems are picked up and given disproportionate attention in the national press¹⁹.

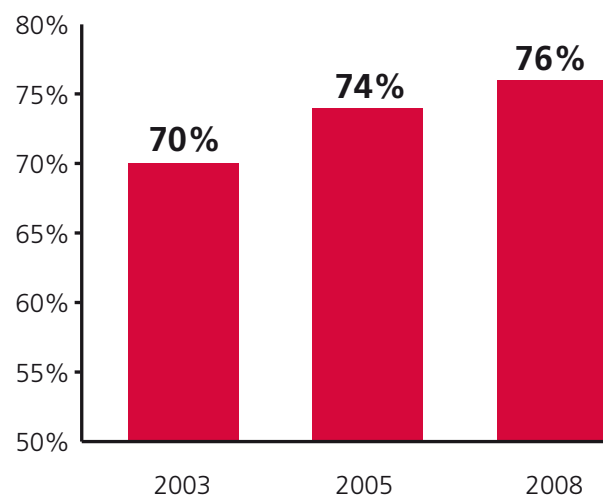
13. People also believe that those who flout the rules get away with it. Louise Casey's review, *Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime*²⁰, found that although 66 per cent of people felt they had a role to play in tackling crime, and 75 per cent would be prepared to give up some of their spare time for related activities, many are reluctant to do so because they feel the system is weighted in favour of offenders. Only 33 per cent of the public are confident that the justice system meets the needs of victims, while 79 per cent agree it respects the rights of offenders. The sense that punishments are ineffective or invisible, leaving victims and witnesses in fear of reprisal attacks, intimidation or simply unaware of what has happened as a result of their action, means some people are reluctant to 'do the right thing' in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.

STRONG COMMUNITIES SUSTAINING AND REFRESHING FAIR RULES

14. As well as having shared values and acting on those values, a strong society needs strong communities and strong social institutions to preserve and protect those values. It is through these broader networks that we share our values with one another; that we come to understand one another; that we build a sense of what we hold in common and what unites us as a country. Evidence shows that on all these fronts, the fundamentals are strong in Britain today.

**WE CAN ONLY TACKLE THE
PROBLEMS WE FACE IF WE
SUCCEED IN SUSTAINING AND
STRENGTHENING OUR SHARED
VALUES AND UNITING AROUND
A COMMON SET OF RULES**

Figure 2: Belonging to the Neighbourhood



Source: Citizenship Survey 2008

15. As Figure 2 above shows, 76 per cent of people feel that they belong 'strongly' to their neighbourhood. Eighty two per cent of people agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together²¹. Social trust is also higher now than at the start of the decade, with 47 per cent of people in 2007 stating that most people in their neighbourhood could be trusted, compared with 40 per cent in 2001²².

16. The same is true of our community and social institutions. Overall levels of volunteering are high and remain unchanged since 2001. In 2007, 73 per cent of all adults had volunteered formally or informally at least once in the last 12 months, with 48 per cent having volunteered at least once a month²³. There are more than 55,000 social enterprises in Britain and it is estimated that more than three per cent of the working age population is engaged in social enterprises. This figure is likely to grow as colleges and universities offer more courses in this area²⁴.

17. Communities and social institutions are not just a mechanism for promoting fair rules; they are also how we refresh and renew fair rules. To do this they need to be empowered. However, while people feel in control of their own lives²⁵, evidence shows that only 37 per cent of people feel they can influence decisions in their local area and only 20 per cent of people feel they can influence decisions affecting Britain as a whole. Without empowered communities, we are failing to harness the energy and innovation of citizens in influencing local services and decisions and tackling the challenges we all face. This has been an important focus for this Government, in particular through the *Communities in Control* White Paper²⁶.

A STRONG SOCIETY NEEDS STRONG COMMUNITIES AND STRONG SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT ITS VALUES

CHAPTER 2

STRONG COMMUNITIES

STRONG COMMUNITIES ARE VITAL TO OUR ECONOMIC STRENGTH AND SENSE OF WELL-BEING. COMMUNITIES WORK BEST WHERE PEOPLE ARE HEARD, RESPECTED AND FEEL THEY CAN INFLUENCE LOCAL DECISIONS.



1. A strong society is built on strong communities; and strong communities rest on a strong platform of shared values and fair rules. Strong communities are vital to our economic strength and sense of well-being. But people's sense of their community's strength is determined by how safe it feels, how it looks, and the sense that neighbours are all doing their bit.

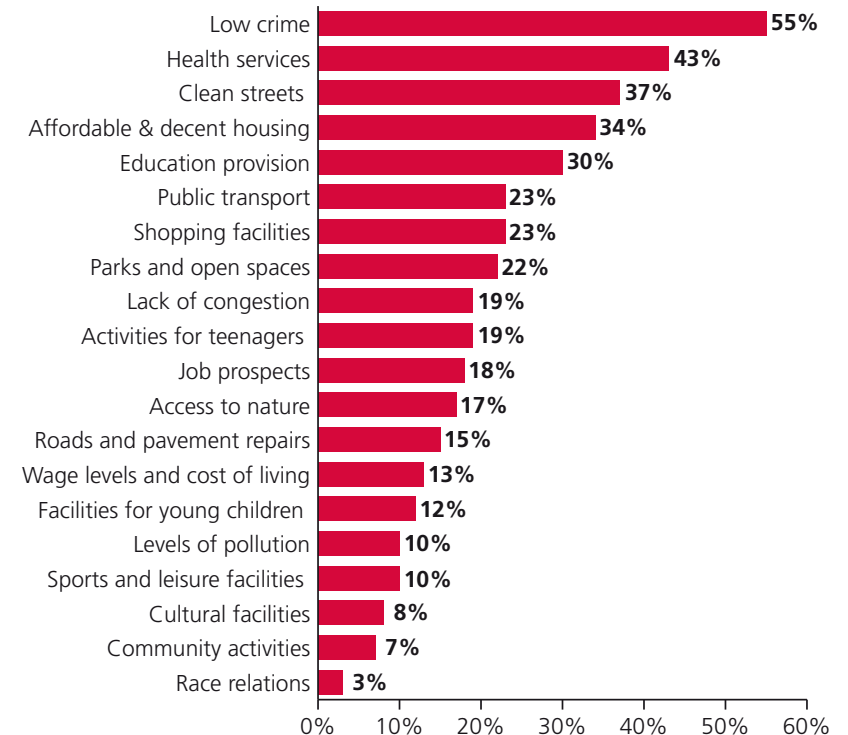
STRONG COMMUNITIES MATTER TO THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THEM

2. We need to be clear about why communities matter to people, what people think makes a community strong.

3. While different studies and slightly different questions can show quite different answers, one factor always remains top of the list: safety. Above all, people want to live in a place where they are free from crime and the threat of crime (see Figure 3 below). This holds true irrespective of the type of neighbourhood: deprived or prosperous; urban or rural; ethnically homogenous or diverse²⁷.

**LIKE ALL GOOD RELATIONSHIPS,
COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS
REQUIRE INVESTMENT – THEY
REQUIRE PEOPLE TO GIVE
AS WELL AS RECEIVE**

Figure 3: What Makes A Good Place



Source: BVPI 2006-07

*Regression analysis explains 46% of variation in satisfaction with area.

4. Beyond safety, people want their communities to feel cohesive with neighbours they trust and can rely on; they want good hospitals that protect their families in times of need; they want good schools their children can go to and parks where they can play; they want a place that is clean and well designed with access to green spaces and cultural and sports facilities; they want access to good jobs and housing that is affordable.

5. And it is clear that people want to have a say in the services and decisions which affect them and their communities. For example, 69 per cent of respondents to the 2007 Audit of Political Engagement said that they wanted to have a say in how the country is run. Citizens should be involved in decision-making, exercising power and influence, and should have opportunities to have their views heard. This means central and local government listening to citizens and working with partners to deliver good services. It means citizens working together, not just by living by the rules that society puts in place, but by making their views known and taking collective action on things which affect them and their communities.

6. While the list is long, people are right to be demanding and they are right to want the very best for themselves and their families. Just as this Government's vision for economic prosperity requires that 'every nation, region, locality and neighbourhood

of the UK performs to its full economic potential²⁸, its vision for Britain as a society acknowledges the demands people place on their local area and requires that 'every community is a place where people want to live, work and bring up their families²⁹'.

STRONG COMMUNITIES ARE VITAL TO ECONOMIC STRENGTH...

7. But strong communities are also vital to our economic strength. Strong social networks can be vital to finding a job, with unemployment in some areas being partly attributed to weak social bonds³⁰. In the UK as a whole, 25 per cent of men and 31 per cent of women find their jobs through personal relationships, compared to nine per cent and seven per cent respectively at the job centre³¹. More indirectly, but just as importantly, strong and prosperous local communities can help to tackle social tensions, especially during an economic downturn, building up our resilience and confidence as a country. Strong communities are also important for the long term economic future of the country, with evidence suggesting a link between strong communities, educational attainment³² and future life chances for children³³.

8. Of course, much economic activity in communities is never measured. Baby-sitting for a neighbour or volunteering with community groups are among activities that have been estimated to be worth up to 30

per cent of GNP if they were 'paid' for³⁴. Just because it isn't measured, doesn't mean that it doesn't have value – indeed, the strength of our society depends on it, making us more resilient to the financial challenges that we might face, both global and personal.

... BUT JUST AS IMPORTANTLY, STRONG COMMUNITIES ARE VITAL TO A SENSE OF WELL-BEING...

9. Studies show that people who talk to their neighbours report higher levels of life satisfaction³⁵. The connections and interactions between people and places that make up a community are of significant value to people and their everyday quality of life³⁶. Strong communities are not just a means to an end, they are an end in themselves and an important factor in promoting well-being.

10. The quality of contact with neighbours can be just as important as the quantity of contact in building strong communities. Studies show that getting actively involved in the community, often through volunteering or participation in voluntary and community groups, is an important part of building up levels of trust³⁷. Like all good relationships, community relationships require investment – they require people to give as well as receive.

11. Communities also contribute to people's broader well-being. Strong personal networks can have a significant positive impact on mental health³⁸ and physical health³⁹. Strong community networks are particularly important for groups such as the elderly and the socially excluded. Studies show that during extreme weather, the socially isolated are more likely to die, and that people with weak social ties are three times less likely to survive the years following a heart attack than those with intimate social ties⁴⁰.

12. Communities are particularly important to the lives of children. Activity with friends provides children with enjoyment, accomplishment and belonging. It supports the development of interpersonal skills, such as empathy, trust and the ability to express ideas⁴¹.

TACKLING THOSE WHO BREAK THE RULES IS CRITICAL TO STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES...

13. The link between crime and communities is an extremely important one. Weak communities where people don't know or trust each other are less able to promote acceptable standards of behaviour – they have higher levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, and greater fear of crime and concern about anti-social behaviour⁴². But, more importantly, this can create a negative cycle – where high crime and the fear of crime leads to reduced interaction between residents which in turn reduces trust and the

ability of communities to deal with local problems⁴³. This can quickly lead to a downward spiral in a community. However, if used positively, the link between crime, local people and local relationships can create an upward spiral in the safety and civility of the neighbourhood.

14. There is an important role here for the police and the criminal justice system in ensuring that the law-abiding majority is properly supported and reassured that those who break the rules will not be tolerated. However, the public themselves are our greatest weapon in the fight against crime and anti-social behaviour. Direct community action can reduce crime and fear of crime in ways that police action on its own could never do. This can range from coordinated community action against specific local problems to a general willingness to speak out or intervene when people see something wrong⁴⁴.

... BUT SO IS WHAT A COMMUNITY LOOKS LIKE...

15. It is not just the people we live with who shape our sense of community. The place itself, the physical buildings and spaces that make up a neighbourhood are also important⁴⁵. The design and quality of our local environment can have direct impacts on safety, the local economy⁴⁶, social interaction⁴⁷ and physical and mental health⁴⁸. The manner in which buildings and

the natural environment are designed, developed and cared for influences a sense of place, fosters local identity and shapes the pleasure people get from their surroundings⁴⁹. And the ways our villages, towns and cities are planned can have a big impact on services, transport, pollution and congestion, as well as climate change⁵⁰. Local government has a strong place-shaping role to fulfil on behalf of the local communities it represents.

16. It is not just how our communities look – what is in them is equally important. The range and standards of shops and services in an area can strongly influence the character of a neighbourhood. Town centres dominated by pubs and clubs can easily come to feel hostile or threatening – especially if they become a centre for binge drinking and associated anti-social behaviour on weekend nights. Likewise the arrival of lap-dancing clubs can fundamentally alter the feel of a local area for the worse. Poor quality environments are of particular concern in deprived neighbourhoods, where they can cause the most economically active people in the area to leave as soon as they can, preventing the area as a whole from climbing out of deprivation⁵¹.

17. Conversely, good community resources such as hospitals, libraries and schools – and access through well-planned local transport – provide support and opportunity for families. Access to local cultural, sporting and social activities can strengthen community ties⁵². And access to green space can make people happier, with positive effects on blood pressure, cholesterol, outlook on life, stress and child development⁵³.

... AND SO IS GIVING PEOPLE A SAY OVER HOW THEIR COMMUNITY IS RUN

18. While social and economic factors play a central role in the strength of communities, people are happier when there are greater levels of local democracy, where they feel they can influence local decisions and that their voice will be heard and respected. This is because people feel that the Government's actions more closely match the communities' wishes, and they value being involved in democracy⁵⁴.

19. Giving people a say in how their community is run is also important because change that comes from the community is often better received and longer lasting. Given the right support and resources, communities are often best placed to identify problems, balance competing demands and recommend solutions. Even where people don't get involved directly

their ability to influence outcomes is just as important. A study of regeneration found that 73 per cent of people who felt they could influence decisions about the regeneration work felt it improved the area, while only 50 per cent of people who did not feel they had any influence⁵⁵ felt that it had. Other studies have pointed to real improvements in housing and other local service delivery where community involvement and participation has been managed effectively.

20. If communities are to continue to provide the glue that strengthens our society, then empowerment – of individuals and of community groups – is central to how they will do so.

21. As part of this Government's agenda to harness the energy and innovation of communities at a more local level, we have devolved significant powers to the Scottish Parliament, the Northern Ireland Assembly and the National Assembly for Wales. As a result of this devolution the people of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales have devolved administrations and legislatures with real power to make local decisions that reflect the needs of their respective communities and respect their traditions.

22. Delivery of the individual policies which will help to ensure the principles of fair rules and a fair say for our communities is in some cases the responsibility of the Government

WEAK COMMUNITIES WHERE PEOPLE DON'T KNOW OR TRUST EACH OTHER ARE LESS ABLE TO PROMOTE ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

across the whole of Great Britain – for example immigration laws. In other cases it is the responsibility of the respective devolved administration. The Northern Ireland Executive has in place policies which cover many of the policies in this document and which reflect the circumstances and traditions of Northern Ireland. In Scotland, the Scottish Parliament is responsible for legislation affecting many areas including crime and policing, victim support, local community infrastructure, health and education. The Welsh Assembly Government has policies in place to deliver on those areas for which it has responsibility and where that responsibility is shared with the UK Government or is non-devolved, it plays its part in engaging with local people to deliver to their communities.

23. While this document highlights common values and themes that run across our communities, many of the areas of policy delivery highlighted focus on England. The Government looks forward to working closely with the devolved administrations to ensure that fair play and fair rules apply to all.

CHAPTER 3

FAIR RULES FOR ALL

OUR SHARED COMMITMENT TO FAIR RULES IS A SOURCE OF SHARED STANDARDS OF DECENCY AND SELF-SACRIFICE – THE POLITICS OF THE COMMON GOOD. PEOPLE ARE WILLING TO GO TO EXTRAORDINARY LENGTHS TO HELP OTHERS IF THEY KNOW THAT THEIR HELP WILL BE RECIPROCATED IN TIMES OF NEED.



1. Fair treatment is the basis on which trust and respect are established. Where we are treated fairly we are inclined to reciprocate and treat people fairly in return. Where we believe rules are fair or organisations treat people fairly, we are more willing to view them as legitimate and cooperate with them⁵⁶.

2. This has important implications for public policy. Rules need to be fair and seen to be fair. People need to be given a say in shaping them, they need to be 'owned' by communities, and they need to be fairly applied. People rightly expect a tax and benefit system and public services⁵⁷ that allow families to enjoy the rewards of hard work and help those most in need, while ensuring that others do not take

advantage⁵⁸. They want a police service and a justice system that ensure that innocent people are protected, victims and witnesses are supported and those who break the rules are properly punished and reformed. And they expect an approach to immigration that offers opportunities to hardworking newcomers with the skills our economy needs, while clearly setting out their responsibilities as well as their rights.

3. Ideals of social justice and fair play have deep roots in British society. Nevertheless, as a government, we need to be continuously reviewing our policies and the way public agencies work, to ensure they embody and reinforce principles of fairness and are recognised by the public as fair.

4. As the country enters difficult economic times, with families working harder, household budgets coming under pressure and more demands being placed on public resources, fair rules will become increasingly important.

5. If people perceive that not everyone is treated equally: that some get preferential treatment; that people who break the rules 'get away with it'; that people who do the right thing in difficult circumstances are not supported or rewarded for doing so; or that people's views about fair rules are not being heard, respect for rules is undermined and the foundations on which a strong society and strong communities rest are weakened.

IDEALS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND FAIR PLAY HAVE DEEP ROOTS IN BRITISH SOCIETY

A POSITIVE AGENDA

6. Our shared commitment to fair rules is a source of shared standards of decency and self-sacrifice – the politics of the common good. People are willing to put their own interests second if they know they will not be exploited; they are willing to respect decisions that go against them if they are convinced that the process that led to those decisions was fair; they are willing to go to extraordinary lengths to help others if they know that help will be reciprocated in times of need.

7. Fair rules need to protect and promote these values. They should provide a framework of active support for the majority of hard working people who do play by the rules and reward them appropriately; they should ensure that community voices about fairness are heard and that decisions are made with due consideration for others; they should guarantee a level playing field for all people to live their lives and fulfil their potential. This fundamentally positive agenda can only succeed if we set out and enforce clear consequences for the minority of people who don't play by the rules and who at best undermine and at worst cause misery to whole communities.

GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO FAIR RULES

8. The Government is committed to ensuring that the rules are not only fair, but are seen to be fair by everyone. That means:


- Making sure the rules are fair by giving people a fair say in the decision-making process, so that fair rules reflect their views and concerns and are 'owned' by the community
- Being clear in laying out the rules. The rules may be obvious for some, but we can't always assume that everyone knows what the rules are, especially in a period of rapid change
- Backing people who stick to the rules. This means supporting law-abiding citizens, especially when they hit hard times. It also means supporting and rewarding citizens who actively stand up for fair rules and decency in their communities
- Making sure that people who don't play by the rules are punished appropriately and that people know about it.

CHAPTER 4

A FAIR WELFARE SYSTEM

A WELFARE SYSTEM UNDERPINNED BY FAIR RULES IS A BALANCED SYSTEM – A ‘SOMETHING FOR SOMETHING’ DEAL. THAT IS WHY THE GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN NEED, WHILE ENSURING THAT, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, THOSE WHO GET SUPPORT GIVE SOMETHING BACK.





1. People will go to extraordinary lengths to help others, if they know that they are not being taken advantage of. Likewise, support given to people in difficult situations comes with the obligation to work to improve their situation. A welfare system underpinned by fair rules is a balanced system – a ‘something for something’ deal. That is why the Government continues to reform the benefit and welfare system so that it supports individuals and families in need, while ensuring that, wherever possible, those who get support give something back.

2. One consequence of the importance that we attach as a nation to fair rules is a growing public concern about people or groups who do not play by the rules. One MORI poll found that more than half of people (56 per cent) feel that some groups in Britain get unfair priority when it comes to public services like housing, health services and schools. Fewer than one in seven (16 per cent) actively disagreed with the statement⁵⁹. When communities and services are perceived to be unfair the

support needed to sustain and improve these services and to develop stronger communities is put at risk. As the global economy weakens and pressure increases on the state, it is even more important that fair rules are not only applied to all, but are seen to be applied to all. Indeed, in tougher economic times one of the most important demands will be that everyone who can work, does work. Those who cannot work, whether temporarily or more permanently, will still need to receive financial and practical support. To achieve this we need a fair system that focuses on what people can do rather than what they cannot, and offers them appropriate support.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... ENSURING THOSE ON BENEFITS PLAY BY THE RULES

3. In keeping with the principle of fair rules, the Government is introducing a tiered system for those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). People who have been claiming benefits for several months will

enter a more demanding regime to improve their employability – the directed job search. They will be required to widen the scope of jobs they look for and will have to accept any suitable employment they are offered. They will also be required to sign on every week for up to six weeks.

4. Where people have been claiming JSA for more than six months, they will be moved into supported job search, and allocated a personal adviser. They will have to agree a back to work action plan, likely to include additional training. Anyone on JSA for more than a year will be referred to an external provider for tailored, specialist help through the Flexible New Deal. Jobseekers will be offered suitable jobs regularly, and will risk losing benefits for up to 26 weeks if they do not attend Jobcentre Plus or do not take a suitable job when offered.

5. From October 2010, lone parents with a youngest child aged seven or over will no longer be entitled to income support solely on the grounds of being a lone parent. Instead, those able to work may claim JSA. As with everyone else claiming JSA, they will be expected to pursue suitable paid work in return for personalised help and support. We believe this is fair, but also good for families and for children. We estimate that within five years these measures could encourage 75,000 extra lone parents into employment and, in turn, lift around 70,000 children out of poverty by 2013⁶⁰. The state must also play its role in ensuring that appropriate childcare and support is available.

6. We take a hard line on social security benefit fraud. Benefit fraud is now at the lowest level ever recorded, down 66 per cent since 2001. Our estimate suggests that as of March 2008 benefit fraud had been reduced to 0.6 per cent of benefit spend. But we are committed to doing more to reducing fraud. That is why we are:

- That is why we are piloting Voice Risk Analysis technology together with additional training to help assess whether a benefit claimant is providing misleading information. Over the coming year, 25 local authorities who administer housing benefits to over 500,000 beneficiaries will pilot this technology. If the pilot proves successful, we will move to roll out this technology across the benefit system
- Introducing a new 'one strike' rule for benefit cheats. The Government already has a tough 'two strikes' rule which dictates that anyone convicted twice or more in five years of making fraudulent benefit claims will lose benefits for at least 13 weeks. We will now back this up with a penalty for first time benefit fraud offenders under which they can expect to lose their benefits for four weeks.

7. The abolition of Incapacity Benefit and the introduction this autumn of Employment and Support Allowance for people with health conditions and disabilities, extends further the idea that everyone should make every reasonable effort to get back to work as soon as they can. This new benefit is focused on what people can do rather than what they can't, with the vast majority of claimants expected to engage with the support offered and take reasonable steps back towards work.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... CLEAR RULES AND A SIMPLER BENEFIT SYSTEM

8. In the Welfare Reform Green Paper, the Government committed to designing a simpler benefit system with the flexibility to cope with the diverse needs that people face. The idea of reducing the number of benefits has great merit – a radical, modernising approach to removing some of the complexity inherent in the current system.

9. A simplified system of income-replacement benefits would free staff from juggling the administration of different benefits. This would give them more time to help customers understand their entitlement and the support on offer, focusing more on individual need and less on the type of benefit. We want to explore whether, over the long-term, this can be achieved in a single benefit drawing on the best features of JSA, Income Support and the new Employment and Support Allowance.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... ENCOURAGING ENTERPRISE AND EMPLOYMENT

10. While fair rules mean making sure people cannot cheat the system, they are also about giving a hand-up to those who want to take responsibility. There are practical barriers to those on benefits and others from disadvantaged backgrounds

who wish to become self-employed. These include lack of equity, or a lack of confidence to access mainstream advice or the experience to negotiate with a bank. That is why, for those seeking self-employment or wanting to start their own firm, the Government is establishing the enterprise coaching service. This will be available from next year, in places where regional and local bodies identify the greatest need and opportunity.

11. Enterprise coaches are part of the Solutions for Business package of publicly funded business support. They will provide one-to-one, confidential and practical assistance to make it easier for people to evaluate whether enterprise is for them and, if it is, to help them succeed. By doing this, they will support self-starters in laying the foundations of future prosperity for themselves, their families, and their local communities.

12. At the heart of the of the Government's new approach to welfare and skills reform is a strong focus on identifying the barriers to sustainable employment and progression, and organising welfare and skills systems to tackle them. The Government is also committed to helping individuals find and keep a job and, when in work, to continue to train and gain new skills and qualifications so that they can progress to better paid and rewarded employment. We are working to integrate employment and skills services so that they:

- help those seeking work to understand their responsibility to address their skills needs in order to get into work
- enable people to appreciate the importance of developing skills as the key to getting on in work
- make it easier for people to get the training they need to address their particular needs
- are flexible and responsive to local needs and the labour market
- provide an integrated service to employers to meet their labour market and skills needs .

13. Trials of this integrated approach have started in the West Midlands, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk and will be expanded further in the remainder of 2008-09.

14. An integrated employment and skills approach is also central to the Government's plans to help those facing redundancy during periods of difficult economic conditions, or those who have been unemployed for longer. Government departments are working together to ensure that a joined up package of assistance is available to help people quickly back into sustainable employment.

AS THE GLOBAL ECONOMY WEAKENS AND PRESSURE ON PUBLIC SERVICE INCREASES, IT IS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAT FAIR RULES ARE NOT ONLY APPLIED TO ALL, BUT ARE SEEN TO BE APPLIED TO ALL.

CHAPTER 5

CRIME, POLICING AND JUSTICE

THE PUBLIC WANT SERVICES THAT TACKLE CRIME AT ITS ROOTS. BUT THEY ALSO WANT A SYSTEM THAT HOLDS OFFENDERS TO ACCOUNT FOR THEIR ACTIONS, AND ENSURES THEY MAKE AMENDS TO THEIR VICTIMS AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE. PART OF THE CHALLENGE FOR GOVERNMENT IS TO ENGAGE COMMUNITIES AS PARTNERS IN TACKLING CRIME.



1. The law abiding majority is bigger today than ever before. Crime and reoffending are falling and people report feeling increasingly safe in their local areas. But crime remains a top public concern and people value safety in their communities above all other qualities.

2. The message from the public is clear. They want public services that tackle crime at its roots, preventing adults and young people alike from going off the rails. But they also want a system that holds offenders to account for their actions, and ensures they make amends to their victims and the community at large. Most people are clearly ready and willing to take a more active part in helping make their communities safer. But only if they see that services put them first, reflect their values and respond to their concerns.

3. Part of the challenge for government is to help the public realise their own strength and engage them as partners in tackling crime.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... THE CASEY REVIEW AND POLICING GREEN PAPER

4. The Government has already done much to transform the police and the justice system. We are committed to building on the fall in overall crime, to focus more on the most serious crime – including violence – and on the issues which matter most at local level.

5. Through the Policing Green Paper and the Casey Review we have already set out our plans to make the police and justice system more responsive to the needs and priorities of local people:

- We have increased the number of police officers and are building on this by freeing the police from red tape – allowing them to focus on the most serious crime, and the crime and disorder that matters to communities – and making police more visible on the beat
- Every neighbourhood in the country now has its own Neighbourhood Police Team and, through the Police Pledge, we are introducing national standards for what people can expect from their local team – how you can contact them, how fast they will respond, and how much time they will spend on the beat
- From the new year, there will be online maps giving people information about crime in every area and what is being done about it. And we are strengthening the public's voice on crime and policing by introducing directly elected policing representatives to ensure that communities have a visible and accountable champion with a mandate to hold the police and their partners to account

- In September 2008, the Justice Secretary announced his intention to open up the power of the internet to allow people to see the outcomes of criminal court hearings and in the new year we will publish proposals for ways in which the public can see how those accused of crime have been dealt with by criminal courts
 - But we want to do more. Fair rules in crime, policing and justice means showing the law-abiding majority that the system is on their side – that those who break the rules suffer the consequences, and that we will do more to support those who help to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in their area.
- 6.** As part of this, the Government will publish proposals in early 2009 looking at: joining up engagement with communities across the whole justice system; providing better information on criminal justice outcomes; raising visibility of sentences; and developing the community justice approach.

7. We know that the criminal courts can appear remote and that people believe the courts do not understand their problems. Since an initial launch in Liverpool in 2005, community justice has helped to change these perceptions, and has proved popular among those communities. The approach involves making the court more responsive to local people and working in partnership with the range of criminal justice agencies, support services and community groups to solve the problems caused by offending in the local area. Offenders are offered help with the underlying causes of crime, such as addiction, debt or employment problems.

8. Community justice is becoming an integral part of the justice system, with 13 community courts now up and running. We are also developing courts that target offenders with more specific problems, such as offenders addicted to Class A drugs or suffering from a mental disorder. By taking a problem-solving approach, the aim of these courts is to reduce reoffending by finding new ways to engage with offenders' issues and challenge their offending behaviour.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... REBALANCING THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

9. Because people want clear consequences for those who break the law we are delivering around 2,800 new prison places this year – to ensure that where a crime requires a prison sentence there will always be the capacity. We are building more places, not because overall crime is going up, but because criminals, especially violent criminals, are now more likely to be sent to prison than 10 years ago, and to stay there longer.

10. Prison is obviously not the answer for all crimes. For less serious crimes other punishments can be more effective in reducing crime and paying back dues to society. From 1 December we are introducing tougher Community Payback. This means offenders will undertake activities that provide benefit for local communities, such as cleaning up graffiti or renovating community centres. Offenders will be required to wear a uniform and do hard work, not for an hour a week but for several hours a day. And communities themselves will identify suitable projects, with suggestions collected through Neighbourhood Policing meetings and citizens' panels. We are also investigating how young offenders might also participate in Community Payback approaches.

11. We understand that we can not prevent some people from reoffending without addressing underlying problems, like drug addiction. That is why, in keeping with our fair rules values, we are increasingly attaching conditions such as drug treatment to sentences. Offenders will get the help they need, but if they do not engage with the support offered they can expect a heavier punishment, including time in prison. We will have six Drug Court pilots in operation which aim to help offenders take responsibility for their addiction and comply with their order. We expect these pilots to reduce reoffending, improve attendance at court and increase compliance with community orders.

12. Witness intimidation is also a major obstacle in bringing some crimes to justice and reduces public confidence in the criminal justice system. We have introduced a range of special measures to enable witnesses to provide evidence through televised links from outside the courtroom, behind screens and away from the public and large numbers of press. These and other measures, such as witness anonymity orders, have played a vital role in securing

convictions in a number of the most serious and violent crime cases. We have legislated to restore a trial judge's power to grant a witness anonymity order⁶¹ which means that witnesses who fear for their safety will continue to be given every possible protection. We intend to strengthen that protection further through new measures – including legislation – to ensure that witnesses are able to give their best evidence safely without fear of reprisals.

13. Finally, we want to build on the Government's strong record of support for victims and witnesses. This Government has more than trebled funding for Victim Support, the main organisation responsible for helping victims. This September the Prime Minister announced that the Government would be seeking to appoint a Victims' Commissioner who can represent victims' views at the highest level, drive further reform in the justice system in relation to victims and witnesses, and improve public confidence in the support available to them. At the moment the public is much less satisfied than victims and witnesses with the way these groups are looked after by the system.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... TURNING THE TABLES ON THE MOST PERSISTENT OFFENDERS

14. We are also working with the police to develop new approaches to 'turn the tables' on the most persistent offenders, so that their own communities do not perceive them as 'getting away with it'. We are working with agencies, not just the police and the courts but also bodies like the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency and TV Licensing Authority, to share information on individual offenders so that those who are found to be breaking several different rules are dealt with more firmly than someone who might have made a single honest mistake. And where people persist with this behaviour, we will ensure that we have the right powers to hold them to account for it.

15. Furthermore, we launched the Priority and other Prolific Offenders (PPO) programme in 2004 to manage the most prolific offenders. This sees the police, prison and probation services working together to tackle some of the most challenging offenders. PPOs are intensively supervised, with access to services to help them reform, backed up by rapid enforcement and police surveillance for the non-compliant. Offenders on the programme have demonstrated a 62 per cent reduction in overall convictions in the 17 months after entry on the programme compared to the 17 months before⁶².

WORKING WITH NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE

On a recent visit to Northamptonshire, the Home Secretary met members of the local community who, together with their local Neighbourhood Policing team, had reduced crime at a local park by carrying out patrols in the area and providing a rapid response to incidents.

Offending in the park is at its lowest for seven years and robbery is down by 34 per cent since April this year.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... SUPPORTING PEOPLE TO DO THE RIGHT THING

16. We know that the vast majority of people agree on what constitutes unacceptable behaviour. And we know from the Casey Review that the majority of people feel they have a role to play in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour. But for most people, doing the right thing – whether that's reporting a crime, joining a Neighbourhood Watch scheme or challenging unacceptable behaviour personally – is not an easy option. And perceptions that the law is not on the side of people who take a stand, mixed messages about whether to get involved and fears about personal safety can undermine our own sense of what we should do when we see the rules being broken.

17. We will do more to encourage and support people who want to help tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in their local area. In part, that means making it easier to do the right thing by providing more and better ways to get involved, including measures set out in the Policing Green Paper.

18. We will encourage the police and other agencies to work *with* local people to solve problems, involving them directly in delivering community-led solutions to the issues that concern people most, like anti-social behaviour in public places. Neighbourhood Policing is a great platform on which to build, good examples of what it can achieve.

19. We have also announced a £5m Community Crime Fighters programme to train 3,600 members of the public who are already active in their community, and who want to do more to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. The programme will give them the skills, knowledge and confidence to act as advocates for their communities, working with Neighbourhood Police Teams. The third sector (voluntary and community groups and social enterprises) also has much to contribute here, building capacity in communities and helping people come together to address shared problems.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH IN THE WIRRAL

A local coordinator for the Neighbourhood Watch group on an estate in the Wirral assisted the Neighbourhood Policing Team to gather information on a family in her road who were the main cause of anti-social behaviour. The Neighbourhood Policing Team worked with Wirral Partnership Homes, Tranmere Alliance, education partners and social services in an effort to deal with the issues. The road was highlighted at a previous tasking and coordinating meeting as having more than 50 per cent of the police's anti-social behaviour calls.

The community approach has solved the problem – the anti-social behaviour calls have stopped and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour have fallen.

20. But supporting people to do the right thing also means being clearer about what we expect from people, and what they should expect from each other. The police will always play the lead role in upholding safety, fair rules and decent behaviour in our communities. But they cannot do this on their own. We all have a role to play. Government cannot be seen as neutral on the question of whether individuals and communities should challenge unacceptable behaviour. We will not encourage people to put themselves at risk by intervening in dangerous situations, but where they do, we will recognise their bravery. We want to make clear that there are many ways to get involved, from reporting crime to engaging with your Neighbourhood Police Team to forming a Neighbourhood Watch group.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... EMPOWERING AUTHORITY FIGURES

21. There are many thousands of people in positions of responsibility, such as teachers, healthcare professionals and neighbourhood wardens, who often find themselves at the forefront of dealing with unacceptable behaviour. The public naturally looks to such people to guarantee standards of fairness and behaviour in public places. If they are not able to fulfil that role because they are not sure that the law is on their side, or because they do not see it as being part of their job, that sends the wrong message about what we as a society are prepared to tolerate.

22. We want to empower people in positions of authority so that those who want to challenge bad behaviour can do so in the knowledge that the law is on their side. That means ensuring that people providing a service to the public are fully supported and protected by the law, and that trouble-makers understand that attacking such a person in the course of their duties brings with it severe penalties:

- Law abiding people who ‘have a go’ against burglars or who intervene as bystanders in a street robbery may have been worried by reports that they could end up the subject of a police investigation or even court action. Although such occasions have in fact been few and far between they can still put people off from acting as good citizens. So earlier this year the Government got Parliament to change the law, to tilt the balance more in favour of the law-abiding British citizen.
- In 2001, the Government adopted a ‘zero tolerance’ approach to violence against NHS staff, which included giving managers the right to withhold treatment as a last resort, when patients are clearly responsible for their actions and no lives are at risk. A concordat agreed between NHS managers and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) in March 2005 states that the police will seek to prosecute all cases of violence against NHS staff. The Government will work with stakeholders to see whether there is scope for developing similar agreements for other authority figures

WE WILL DO MORE TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT PEOPLE WHO WANT TO HELP TACKLE CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THEIR LOCAL AREA

- Sentencing guidelines were amended in February this year to allow judges and magistrates when passing sentence to take into account whether the victim of an assault was a public servant or providing a service to the public. The Government will work with the judiciary to assess how this is working, and to deliver clearer messages to the public on how the courts are supporting authority figures
- Legislation which came into force in May 2007 gave head teachers a new power to search, if necessary without consent, any pupil they suspect of carrying a weapon. The Government also reminded schools in October 2006 that they had the power to screen pupils at random using hand-held wands or arches. Legislation also gives school staff the power to use force to prevent a pupil committing an offence, causing injury or damage to a person or property, or prejudicing the maintenance of good order at the school. We will assess the case for clarifying and potentially strengthening the legal authority of other public servants.

23. We are committed to supporting people in positions of responsibility as they work towards making our communities safer. Developing close relationships with local partners such as Neighbourhood Wardens, youth workers and housing associations is one of the driving principles of Neighbourhood Policing. And as of August 2008, more than 1,400 people have been accredited through Community Safety Accreditation Schemes across England and Wales. The schemes allow Chief Constables to confer powers to, for example, confiscate fireworks or alcohol, issue Fixed Penalty Notices for acts such as littering or graffiti and issue Penalty Notices for Disorder. Any organisation with a community safety role, such as a local authority or NHS trust, can apply for accreditation for its employees.

OPERATION LEOPARD

Operation Leopard, an initiative run by Essex police, is one example of 'turning the tables' in action. Following a rise in crime in one of the wards in Pitsea, a survey of 200 residents took place. The survey and initial surgeries provided community intelligence which identified 15 young people as the core offenders who were responsible for a disproportionate share of the trouble. Officers knocked on doors of those offenders, warned them that their behaviour would not be tolerated and then photographed them and their associates for four days. The police and the council judged that this surveillance was a fair response to local concerns, in proportion to the harm that was being caused. The results were dramatic – burglaries, car crime and criminal damage stopped in that period, the effect has been lasting, and there was no rise in displaced crime within the neighbouring wards⁶³.


We are encouraging and supporting other forces to take the same approach, and we want local people to demand this kind of action from their council or neighbourhood police team if they have a problem in their area.

CHAPTER 6

YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAIR RULES

WE WANT ALL YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE HAPPY, HEALTHY AND SAFE AND TO GROW UP WELL PREPARED FOR ADULT LIFE. THEIR SUCCESS SHOULD BE RECOGNISED AND PRAISED. NEVERTHELESS, FAIR RULES APPLY TO YOUNG PEOPLE TOO.





1. We want all young people to be happy, healthy and safe and to grow up well prepared for adult life. Their success should be recognised and praised. They should be given a say in what goes on in their area, how local issues are addressed and how services intended for them are delivered.

2. But being a young person today has its challenges too. Children today are growing up sooner and want more independence at an earlier age. Experimentation in early teenage years and adolescence can expose young people to risks, and where they fail to make informed and sensible choices they can too often put their health and futures at risk. More than ever before, they need to be able to deal with the things that can knock them off course, confident and able to

manage the risks they might face and supported to deal with problems when they arise. We need to make sure they get the help they need so that problems are dealt with early before they become even more difficult to solve later on.

3. Nevertheless, fair rules apply to young people too. A minority of young people continue to blight their communities by breaking the law and behaving in an anti-social way. We believe that we are increasingly able to identify these young people early and can intervene to address the root causes of their behaviour, which includes supporting and challenging their parents to meet their responsibilities. Our approach, as laid out in our *Children's Plan*⁶⁴, published in 2007, and our *Youth Crime*

*Action Plan (YCAP)*⁶⁵ published this summer, is based on a clear message: we will support families and their children through every stage of their lives, at home, in school and in the community. We will do everything to prevent problems occurring in the first place, rather than waiting until they get out of control. When things do go wrong we will work with families and children in trouble to turn their lives around. And we will consult and empower young people, so that they have a say over the decisions that affect them. But in accordance with our fair rules approach, we expect families and young people to fulfil their responsibilities too. We will lay down clear expectations and maintain firm boundaries, ensuring there are clear consequences for those young people who overstep them.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... FAIR RULES AND FAMILY SUPPORT

4. The *Children's Plan* is clear that parents, not governments, bring up children, and that government's role is to support parents to do this difficult job well. But we all need support in bringing up children. Most parents welcome extra help from time to time which is why we have introduced a range of extra support like Sure Start Children's Centres and extended schools. Their main objectives are to promote the health, well being and life chances of children but they have wider benefits including on behaviour later in life, thereby supporting fair rules and decent behaviour.

5. We have invested heavily in families facing particular challenges who might otherwise fail their children. Most accept help voluntarily when it is offered. But with a small number we need to be firmer about what we expect. This is why we have taken powers to compel parents to accept help through parenting orders – for example where they have persistently failed to make their children attend school regularly. It is also why since 2006 we have funded Family Intervention Projects (FIPs), a new and particularly intensive form of family support which comes with tough sanctions for those who do not cooperate. Because FIPs are demonstrating real progress in turning around the lives of the most challenging families, we will continue to build on this approach so that more FIPs are established and will reach 20,000 families with the most severe difficulties by 2011.

SURE START

Sure Start Children's Centres support children under the age of five and their families, providing easy access in the community to a range of services, including health care, parenting and family support, integrated early learning and links to training and employment opportunities.

The latest Sure Start evaluation has shown that children behave better and are more independent if they live in areas with Children's Centres. Parents in those communities have more positive parenting skills and provide a better home learning environment, helping give children the best start in life and preparing them to do well at school and make the most of their talents.

There are already 2,900 Sure Start centres up and running. The Government is providing £3 billion over the next three years to support existing provision and meet its target of 3,500 centres by 2010.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... FAIR RULES AT SCHOOL AND IN THE COMMUNITY

6. Over the last 10 years, government investment in schools has reached record levels. Between 1997-98 and 2008-09, revenue funding has increased nationally by £2,140 per pupil, equating to a 75 per cent increase in real terms. Significant improvements in education outcomes have followed this investment: between 1997 and 2008, the percentage of pupils achieving 5 A*-C grades at GCSE increased from 45 to 64 per cent⁶⁶.

7. We know that a small minority of children continue to cause trouble in school, ruining things for themselves and the pupils around them. That is why we are continuing to bear down on this behaviour. We have invested in extra help and challenge for difficult children and children who have been excluded from school. We have also backed head teachers' authority when pupils' behaviour warrants exclusion. We have protected head teachers' rights to permanently exclude pupils who are very disruptive or violent, and guidance makes clear that a permanent exclusion

should not normally be overturned in a range of circumstances including violence or the threat of violence.

8. Local people and parents have told us that they badly want more and better out of school facilities and activities for young children – especially on weekend nights. And rightly so: structured after school activity has been shown to help children's development and keep them out of trouble⁶⁷. That is why, as laid out in *Aiming High* we are investing £840m over the next three years into these activities and facilities. But with extra opportunities come extra responsibilities. So we are working with ACPO and local government to develop new guidelines on dealing with anti-social behaviour by young people, and encouraging local police services to make full use of the powers available to them, including acceptable behaviour contracts, anti-social behaviour orders and parenting orders, and their powers to confiscate alcohol from under 18s drinking in a public place and direct over 16 year olds to leave a specified place and not return for up to 48 hours.

9. Research suggests that old and young people in this country do not interact as much as they do in most other European countries⁶⁸. Partly as a result, young and older people often view each other with suspicion and mistrust. This in turn can damage community relations and foster feelings of insecurity and isolation. Against this background the Government's Office of the Third Sector will launch a programme of inter-generational volunteering in 2009 that will bring young and older people together on common projects.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... A FAIR SAY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

10. We know that young people are disengaged from formal politics, but they are interested in social and political issues. Sixty seven per cent of 18-24 year olds say they are interested in local issues. We are giving young people a fair say in identifying the issues that affect them most. At national level we have set up a panel of Young Advisers to advise the Communities Secretary Hazel Blears, and we are introducing a wider programme for young people to shadow ministers across government.

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG WE WILL WORK WITH FAMILIES AND CHILDREN IN TROUBLE TO TURN THEIR LIVES AROUND

TACKLING YOUTH CRIME AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The vast majority of young people are well behaved and deserve our support. But a small minority are not – and we make no apology for being tough with them. The Youth Crime Action Plan (YCAP), which was published in July 2008, sets out a 'triple track' approach which combines better and earlier prevention, non-negotiable support for those who most need it and cracking down on young people who offend, including new steps to ensure that young people will repay the community for the consequences of their actions.

YCAP provides almost £100 million for measures which deliver immediate action through extra investment in all areas of England to support families with the most entrenched and complex problems and an intensive programme of investment for 69 priority areas where the problem of youth crime is greatest. This includes taking unsupervised young people off the streets at night and requiring young offenders to complete community service on Friday and Saturday nights.

We also know that knife crime has become a real problem in some communities, especially among young people. That is why we have launched the Tackling Knives Action Programme (TKAP) to deal with the roots of the problem. It includes a £3m preventative campaign, cracking down on those who carry and use knives through more use of stop and search powers and tougher punishment, meaning an end to cautions and a higher proportion of knife offenders sent to prison. In accordance with our fair say principles, the programme has worked closely with local communities afflicted by knife crime, to find solutions to it.

As young people are more likely than adults to be victims of crime, the YCAP commits us to reducing substantially the number of young victims by 2020 and to improving the services we provide to young victims. Our first step towards achieving this is through supporting five pilot areas to test innovative ways of supporting young victims. Findings from these pilots will then be used to improve support for young victims across the country.

11. In *Aiming High* we set out the importance of giving young people a say across the services they use, backed by measures to ensure they have real influence over spending decisions. This included the extension of youth opportunity and capital funds until at least 2011 and an expectation that local authorities will devolve 25 per cent of their positive activities budget to young people's influence by 2018. The new myplace programme, launched in April, will provide new and improved youth facilities across the country and is explicitly driven by the active participation of young people, their views and needs and the views of their communities. A Young Inspector service will be piloted in up to 36 local authority areas across the country with around 30 young people in each local authority area, drawn from the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods being trained to have a real influence and voice in assessing the quality of their local services. This will be based on robust standards that young people themselves will devise. And we are also encouraging local policing teams to take young people's concerns into account when setting policing priorities.

CHAPTER 7

FAIR RULES AND BUSINESSES

BUSINESSES ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE COMMUNITY. JUST LIKE RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES AND THE PEOPLE THAT RUN THEM HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO PLAY BY THE RULES AND HELP MAKE COMMUNITIES SAFE, STRONG AND VIBRANT PLACES TO LIVE.



1. Businesses are an integral part of the community. Just like residents, businesses and the people that run them have an obligation to play by the rules and help make communities safe, strong and vibrant places to live. Concentrations of pubs and clubs can turn town centres into hot spots for trouble – 17 per cent of all violent incidents in 2007 were committed in or around pubs and clubs⁶⁹. Similarly, the arrival of lap-dancing clubs can make a vibrant local environment feel run down or threatening, while clusters of betting shops can fundamentally alter the character of a neighbourhood⁷⁰. While these problems are not widespread, they are a focus for genuine disquiet, and feed into a more general concern about the character of town centres and public spaces⁷¹.

2. The Government is committed to making sure that businesses do not take advantage of people in difficult times and treat individuals fairly. For example, the Equality Bill will provide a simpler legal framework for businesses so that they can more easily understand their responsibilities to treat people fairly. In the current economic climate it is particularly important that banks and other financial institutions can maintain a relationship of trust with their customers, for example, through fair and transparent lending practices.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENT... CIVILITY IN TOWN CENTRES

3. The current alcohol licensing framework provides local authorities with significant powers to ensure that alcohol is sold and used responsibly⁷⁰. However problems remain. Police and other enforcement bodies do not always make full and effective use of the tools and powers they have at their disposal⁷³. And local people are not always fully aware of their rights and of how to raise concerns or share local knowledge about, say, under-age sales.

4. To help address these issues, the Government is targeting a number of priority 'problem areas' with a package of support and challenge, including extra funding for enforcement (especially on under-age sales) and binge drinking which causes crime or anti-social behaviour – and more training for local councillors.

5. In addition, the Government will:

- Continue to work with local authorities and other enforcement agencies in promoting a 'yellow card/red card' scheme for licensed premises, which will allow tough conditions to be placed on problem premises and put them on probation with the risk of losing their license

- Work with local authorities to make it easier for local people to register their concerns about irresponsible and illegal alcohol sales and to view local licensing applications and decisions online. These steps will help empower local communities, making it easier for them to have a say on licensing decisions and will ensure they are heard when licence-holders breach the rules.

6. The Government is also considering proposals to tackle irresponsible selling of alcohol. This could involve creating a code made up of a small number of mandatory national conditions for all alcohol retailers, such as limits on 'all you can drink' promotions, or allowing for a set of targeted conditions to be attached to premises in particular local trouble hotspots.

7. Another important issue is the proliferation of lap dancing clubs in a number of UK towns and cities. There is broad public concern that existing licensing laws are not designed to control the establishment of these activities or address local objections to this sort of entertainment⁷⁴. To address these concerns the Government will reclassify lap dancing clubs as 'sex establishments', so allowing local authorities to consider a wider range of community interests in determining whether to grant a licence.

8. We know that while pubs and bars can cause particular concern, people also worry about more general changes in range and character of local amenities, including the closure of local shops, or the spread of large chains. Local authorities already have considerable powers to address these concerns, and we will continue to encourage and support their use.

9. There has also been public concern about the clustering of betting shops in certain areas – with all the risks this can pose for vulnerable people. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport will be looking into the scope and extent of this problem, and will investigate how we can ensure that the licensing framework and planning system gives local communities and their authorities sufficient power to address this issue.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENT... FAIR RULES AND FINANCE

10. It is important that credit card companies play by the rules and that people who are experiencing trouble paying their credit card bills as a result of the downturn are treated fairly. We expect credit card companies to try to help their customers through difficult times – by giving them good notice of an increase in rates, so they have time to shop

around for another deal or bring down their outstanding balance. We also want the industry to consider introducing a breathing space to give people time to get back on their feet. That is why we have instructed the credit card industry to report back to Government before Christmas with an explicit commitment to treat customers fairly and to act on this. If we are not satisfied with the response from the industry, we will have no hesitation in referring these issues to the consumer watchdog, the Office of Fair Trading, for further investigation and action.

11. The Government believes it is important to ensure that fair rules apply to the activities of banks as well as to individuals. This allows a relationship of trust between the banking industry and citizens. The Government places particular emphasis on ensuring that people can obtain trusted, impartial advice to help them make informed financial decisions; providing free and accessible debt advice for those who are struggling; and promoting responsible lending and borrowing. The Government has announced that a discussion forum between the retail financial services sector and representatives of personal customers will be established to encourage debate and ensure that banks and other financial institutions can work better in the interests of consumers.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENT... SHARING THE BENEFITS OF GROWTH

12. The Government's overall economic objective is to raise the rate of sustainable economic growth in every part of the country. To achieve this, every nation, region, locality and community needs to perform to reach its economic potential. *The Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration* sets out how Government plans to shape rules and regulations to support neighbourhoods and regions in this way. Proposals such as creating a duty on local authorities to carry out an economic assessment of their local area⁷⁵ aim to devolve power and decision making to the level where local economic opportunities are best understood and best captured.

THE GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO MAKING SURE THAT IRRESPONSIBLE BUSINESSES DO NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PEOPLE IN DIFFICULT TIMES

CHAPTER 8

A FAIR IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

BRITAIN IS A FUNDAMENTALLY OPEN AND TOLERANT COUNTRY. BUT WE NEED TO GUARANTEE THAT OUR IMMIGRATION POLICY IS UNDERPINNED BY PRINCIPLES OF FAIR RULES, AND THAT NEWCOMERS GIVE SOMETHING BACK IN EXCHANGE FOR THE WELCOME THEY RECEIVE.





1. Britain is a fundamentally open and tolerant country. Our long history of inward and outward migration has enriched our economy, society and culture. But immigration can bring problems as well as benefits and the public is concerned about its impact on British society and on local communities. We need to guarantee, in short, that our immigration policy is underpinned by principles of fair rules, and that newcomers give something back in exchange for the welcome they receive.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... STRENGTHENING OUR BORDERS

2. The first priority is strong borders so we can ensure that only those legally entitled to enter the United Kingdom are able to do so. This is an essential requirement of both security and fairness. The Government is creating a triple ring of security around Britain by creating a strong new force at the border, rolling out compulsory ID cards for foreign nationals and imposing tougher checks on visa applicants and passengers crossing our borders, including the use of the latest finger-printing and other biometric technology.

3. Identity cards are a central part of this triple ring. New identity cards for foreign nationals – the first cards were issued in November – will enable us to make sure those who are here have the right to be here and to guard against abuses. This will be a major aid in combating identity fraud, crime, illegal immigration, illegal working and terrorism.

4. The e-Borders programme will ensure that by the end of 2010 we will electronically count 99 per cent of non-EU nationals in and out of the UK. The pilot scheme has already checked over 70 million passenger movements, contributing to over 2,500 arrests.

5. Secure borders also means tracking down people who are no longer entitled to remain in Britain, or should not be here in the first place.

- Last year the new UK Border Agency removed over 63,000 people in total, including a record number of foreign offenders (over 4,200)
- We are now introducing local immigration teams across the UK, concentrating on intelligence gathering; the disruption of illegal activity; and tracking down and detaining immigration offenders and failed asylum seekers. Local immigration teams will also be involved in tackling illegal working. This will include tracking down,

naming and shaming the minority of employers who employ illegal workers, and who often both exploit them and unfairly deprive resident workers of opportunities by flouting the minimum wage and other work place standards

- We are doubling our enforcement budget between 2006/07 and 2009/10.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... IMMIGRATION THAT SUPPORTS THE ECONOMY

6. Coming to live and work in Britain is a privilege, not a right. Those who come here benefit from the many things our society offers them, and it is only fair that we select people who are able to contribute fully to our communities and our way of life. The Government has already barred low-skilled migration from outside the EU and placed strict limits on Romanian and Bulgarian workers. The Government is now bringing in a number of changes to reduce further the numbers of economic migrants coming to and staying in Britain, while ensuring that we continue to attract and keep the people with the skills our businesses need.

- We are introducing an Australian-style points-based system, which is flexible enough to ensure we get the migrants and students our economy needs, but no more. The majority of those coming will also need to demonstrate they are sponsored by a government-approved organisation and have a reason for coming here. Points are allocated on a range of personal factors such as occupation and education, depending on the needs of the country at the time
- The points-based system operates in conjunction with the new shortage occupation list – a list which identifies where there are shortages of skills in the national economy. Occupations on the list will attract additional points for migrants if they have a job offer from an approved sponsor. The list will be reviewed regularly by the independent Migration Advisory Committee.

7. We are committed to the principle of free movement in Europe – but with clear responsibilities attached. We believe that everyone should play by the rules. If they do not they should face fair and firm justice. UK citizens should expect the same in EU countries. That is why we are working with EU colleagues to make sure criminals cannot exploit free movement – for example by sharing information on convictions in other EU member states and making sure it can be taken into account in our courts. We are committed to deporting European Economic Area (EEA) nationals who break our laws and are making clear that we will not tolerate criminality. We are removing more EEA criminals than ever before.

COMING TO LIVE AND WORK IN BRITAIN IS A PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT

8. Because skills are so key to success in applying for jobs, we are working with industry – starting with the hospitality and care sectors – to develop compacts which will ensure there are more opportunities for local people to be trained for jobs that might otherwise go to migrant workers.

9. Migration also increases the demand for courses which help develop English language skills. The Government invests significantly in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and has, since 2001, helped two million people improve their English and take vital steps towards employment and integration. Between 2001 and 2004 spending tripled and is now just under £300m each year. But even with this investment provision is often unable to meet demand, leading to waiting lists. We have introduced a series of measures to refocus funding on priority learners. In line with fair rules, we have set an expectation that from 2007-08 those who can afford to pay should make a contribution to the cost of ESOL. Employers, who benefit from

migration and the opportunity to recruit directly from overseas, should meet their fair share of the costs of English language provision. In addition, the points-based system will ensure that migrants from outside the EU have an appropriate level of English before they arrive. Further work is underway to review marriage visas and the requirement for visa applicants to demonstrate competency in English before arrival.

10. These changes help reprioritise provision towards the most disadvantaged, but do not go far enough. The most disadvantaged learners still often face the biggest barriers to access. These are often long term residents, committed to making a contribution to Britain, but whose lack of English prevents them from playing an active role in the community or labour market. This has a negative impact on their life chances and ability to integrate. We consulted earlier this year on a new partnership approach to ESOL. This will support cohesion and integration by giving a stronger role to local partnerships in identifying priority groups for English

language provision. We are now testing this with four local areas and will set out our plans for full implementation in the new year.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... FAIR RULES FOR CITIZENSHIP

11. We are also proposing to change the rules on how newcomers qualify for permanent residence or citizenship, matching rights and benefits with responsibilities and contributions. We are ending the old assumption that staying in Britain for a length of time gives you an automatic right to stay permanently. Instead, we are setting out clear expectations – to work hard, learn English, pay taxes and play by the rules – with increasing numbers of those who break the rules being returned home. There will be no automatic right to stay here after five years.

- All migrants will be required to demonstrate good English ability and knowledge of life in the UK before becoming citizens

- Economic migrants on the work route to citizenship who get involved in their communities will be able to progress to citizenship after spending six years in the UK – as long as they have stayed in work, paid taxes and have no criminal record. Those who do not get involved will need to stay in paid employment for eight years. Economic migrants who are not in paid employment will be asked to leave

- Immigrants on the family route to citizenship must show their relationship still exists. If they don't meet these requirements they will not qualify for citizenship and will be required to leave

- Full access to benefits, including social housing, will be delayed until immigrants have completed a new period of probationary citizenship lasting between one and five years. Those who do not make the grade at any stage will have to leave Britain

- Where people break the rules, we will work to remove them from Britain, targeting first those who pose the greatest potential harm. Last year we successfully deported a record number of foreign national prisoners.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

12. We know that migrants overall make a positive economic contribution. But they also use public services. We are already helping local areas deal with the impact of migration, for instance by providing extra funding for schools with a large number of foreign speaking pupils. From April 2009, however, we will ask migrants themselves to contribute directly towards a new fund that will help local service providers deal with the short-term pressures of migration.

CHAPTER 9

A FAIR SAY IN FAIR RULES

COMMUNITIES WILL NOT FEEL THE FULL BENEFITS FROM FAIR RULES UNLESS THEY HAVE A FAIR SAY IN SETTING THEM. WITH FAIR RULES AND A FAIR SAY COMMUNITIES CAN BUILD THE RESILIENCE THEY NEED TO OVERCOME THE MOST DIFFICULT CHALLENGES THEY FACE.



1. A strong society needs active, cohesive and empowered communities. These are communities where people of all backgrounds get on with each other and feel they belong and, where they want or need something to be done, feel able to take action together. These are communities where people want to make a difference, where they have a sense of fairness to and responsibility for each other, a shared sense of fair rules which protect and support the hard working majority, a real sense of influence over the public decisions that affect them, and pride in the places where they live, work and raise their children.

2. Communities will not feel the full benefits from fair rules unless they have a fair say in setting them, and the support they need to live by them. With fair rules and a fair say communities can build the resilience they need to overcome the most difficult challenges they face – whether that is getting through tough economic times when people feel their jobs and homes are under threat, standing up to campaigns of hate and terror that seek to divide communities, or stopping the culture of carrying and using knives that leads to the loss of loved ones.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... STRONGER AND MORE PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES

3. Local authorities and their partners play an essential role in shaping strong communities, setting out the vision and delivery priorities for their area through their Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Delivery Framework (which set out the long term vision) and Local Area Agreements (which set priorities for delivery). Within this, citizens want, and should have, a fair say in what their organisations do for them. We are giving people opportunities to exercise real power over the decisions and services that affect their lives whether through better information about services and opportunities available in the area; support or encouragement for acts of neighbourliness, volunteering and charitable giving; consultation on important local plans that set the rules for subsequent planning decisions; opportunities to influence priorities of local services like policing; the chance to take over and run public assets like local halls or sports facilities; or the motivation to stand as a councillor or other representative for the community.

4. To strengthen the community voice we will make it easier for citizens to get their priorities and concerns on the council's agenda, placing a duty on local authorities to promote democratic understanding and participation, extending the duty to involve

the community in setting priorities to a wider range of local agencies, and introducing a new duty for councils to respond to petitions. This will complement the single duty in the new Equality Bill, which will require local authorities to involve and consider the needs of different groups in their local community, and give people the chance to get involved. We are also enhancing the ability of community representatives to hold councils to account, ensuring swift and fair redress when services are not satisfactory.

5. As well as ensuring that people get a fair say in setting local priorities and delivering local services, we want people to have a real say in decisions about how budgets are spent in their community. We have already announced 34 local authority areas where some form of participatory budgeting is being developed. In September we set out how we will work towards our ambition for participatory budgeting to be used in every local authority area by 2012⁷⁶.

6. We also want to ensure that citizens have more opportunities to direct, run and even own public services and amenities. Where local asset management and ownership works well it can help to ensure that services meet the real needs of the people who use them, as well as providing good value for money. We are establishing a new Asset Transfer Unit in government to support the transfer of assets between local authorities

and the third sector in areas where there is community interest to do so, and where this is a justified outcome of a strategic approach to asset management.

7. In the context of current economic challenges, it is even more important that no areas are left behind by growth, and that all communities benefit from prosperity and economic opportunity. Initiatives like the New Deal for Communities⁷⁷ and Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders⁷⁸ have shown the crucial role communities can play in regeneration, building their own social capital and driving lasting change in their own neighbourhoods.

8. Programmes like the Working Neighbourhoods Fund and the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative will give local areas the flexibility to focus on community priorities to help tackle long term challenges on worklessness and enterprise. And local communities are central to the aims of *Transforming Places, Changing Lives*⁷⁹ which sets out the Government's vision for regeneration – to drive sustainable change by focusing on the key economic challenges that prevent areas from reaching their potential.

DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS... A STRONGER THIRD SECTOR

9. While strong communities need individual citizens to stand up together and take these

opportunities, the third sector sits at the heart of the active, cohesive and empowered communities we want to foster. It is through these organisations that people often get and take the opportunity to bring about positive changes in their community – through volunteering, mentoring, tailored public services, campaigning and advocacy. By supporting the third sector we can help increase the opportunities available to citizens to contribute to their communities.

10. Participation in voluntary and community organisations strengthens communities and can help build trust and reciprocity, bringing people together to make a positive difference. Community-based organisations are often the platform not only for meeting the needs of individuals, but also for empowering individuals and communities to bring about change, providing the means and channels for people to make their voices heard.

11. So, within and alongside the steps Government is taking to implement its July 2008 White Paper, *Communities in Control*, we are helping to create the conditions in which community groups can thrive.

12. We will be working with community organisations and local authorities to develop local Take Part pathfinders to promote effective ways to encourage people from all backgrounds to get involved in serving their communities and speaking up on issues that matter to them.

13. And we are making a significant investment to help strengthen community-led organisations, through a range of partnership programmes, including:

- The Empowerment Fund, which will provide £7.5 million for third sector organisations to empower local communities through practical action on issues such as community leadership, involvement in planning and social enterprise
- Communitybuilders, a £70 million fund to enable community organisations to develop their capability so that people can have suitable, accessible community facilities where they can come together to discuss their concerns and channel them constructively into local decision-making
- Grassroots Grants, a £130 million scheme to provide much needed funding to enable the smallest, volunteer-led organisations to thrive and direct their energies to the particular challenges they see in their local community, especially in giving a voice to more marginalised groups.

FINAL WORD: STRONGER TOGETHER



**THE RT HON
JACK STRAW MP**
LORD CHANCELLOR
AND SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR JUSTICE

This paper very clearly articulates the crucial role which the justice service plays in working for an even stronger and fairer Britain. Those who play by the rules must have a say in how justice is done – and crucially they must be able to see justice being done. And those who break society's fair rules must be punished through prison sentences or tough community penalties, and given the opportunity of reform. Through constitutional renewal we are drawing the public into the decision making process, strengthening our democracy and ensuring that rules are fairer for all. We are making justice more transparent and responsive to local concerns by making things like Community Payback more visible, opening up the workings of our courts and introducing more Citizens' Panels to give people a say in their justice service.

The Rt Hon Jack Straw MP



**THE RT HON
JACQUI SMITH MP**
HOME SECRETARY

As Home Secretary, my highest priority is to protect the public. That means taking practical steps to stand shoulder to shoulder with local communities, so that people can get on with their daily lives free from the fear of crime, disruption and abuse. Thanks to the work of the police and everyone involved in making our communities safer, you are now much less likely to be a victim of crime.

Of course, the police can't do everything themselves – and that's why the public are the greatest weapon in tackling crime, anti-social behaviour, terrorism, illegal immigration and identity theft. With fair rules in place, people can be confident that the law is on the side of those who do the right thing, and that we are turning the tables on the small minority who try to make life a misery for others. This publication is a powerful expression of how we are putting this sense of fair play right at the heart of the Home Office's work, and standing up for the rights of the law-abiding majority.

The Rt Hon Jacqui Smith MP



**THE RT HON
LORD MANDELSON**
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
BUSINESS, ENTERPRISE
AND REGULATORY
REFORM

With its flexible labour markets, light-touch regulation and government backing for private enterprise, Britain is a friendly place in which to do business. Businesses, and the prosperity they bring, are vital in creating a society of fair chances for all. We want to keep it that way. But it is important, especially as families have to tighten their belts, that businesses play by the rules and give something back to our society. As this publication lays out, government supports, rewards and celebrates businesses and business people who make a positive contribution. They are the life blood of our economy. But government will bear down on companies that don't behave responsibly – including credit card companies that impose rate increases at little or no notice, alcohol retailers that encourage under-age and binge drinking and anyone who works illegally with immigrants. Fair rules in short apply to everyone, including businesses.

The Rt Hon Lord Mandelson



**THE RT HON
HAZEL BLEARS MP**
SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR COMMUNITIES AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In tough economic times, people want to see fair rules that apply to everyone, and have a fair say in their communities. No one should be able to benefit from others' misfortune and no one should be allowed to play the system. We will offer real help to people worried about their jobs, homes and finances. But our support will help the right people who really need it. No one should be in any doubt: if you're prepared to work hard, play by the rules, support your family, get on with your neighbours and look after your property, we are on your side. But if you intend to take more out of the system than you put in, you won't get away with it. Rights matched by responsibilities: that's the fair way.

The Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP



**THE RT HON
ED BALLS MP**
SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR CHILDREN,
SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES

The values of fair treatment and fair rules underpin everything we do at DCSF. This includes making sure children and young people play by the rules and are held to account when they fail to do so. But it also means supporting families who need our support and giving all young people a fair chance in life. And it means encouraging families and young people who rise to particularly challenging circumstances or make a positive contribution to their community.

One of our most fundamental objectives is to encourage young people to develop a sense of justice and citizenship – to encourage a commitment to fair play. It is really important that young people are listened to, and have a fair say in what goes on in their area.

The Rt Hon Ed Balls MP



**THE RT HON
JAMES PURNELL MP**
SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR WORK
AND PENSIONS

I am pleased to endorse this document. In tough times, it is only right for government to continue to offer people help to find jobs, and then to reward hard work. At the same time, no one should be allowed to take advantage of others, which is why today we continue to build on our commitment to combat benefit fraud with a new 'one strike' benefit sanction for benefit cheats.

Alongside this report, Professor Paul Gregg will publish a review I commissioned of the conditions that we apply to benefit claimants. This will consider a more tailored regime where claimants and advisers work together to agree the steps they'll take to get back to work. I will also publish ambitious plans to reform the welfare system to improve support and incentives for people to move from benefits into work, and provide greater choice.

The Rt Hon James Purnell MP



**THE RT HON
ANDY BURNHAM MP**
SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR CULTURE, MEDIA
AND SPORT

Licensed premises are at the heart of our local communities and our visitor and night-time economies. They create local employment, provide excellent leisure facilities and use local goods and services. However, alcohol and gambling can be a cause of social harm if left unchecked and can have a negative effect on local areas. That is why we seek to ensure that irresponsible premises can be tightly regulated, while leaving the well run free to cater for the choices of the local population and tourists. Local people should have greater powers to influence these important decisions which directly affect their day-to-day lives.

The Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP



**THE RT HON
LIAM BYRNE MP**
MINISTER FOR THE
CABINET OFFICE

I'm delighted that Cabinet colleagues and government departments have come together to publish 'Fair Rules for Strong Communities'. Strong communities, built on fair rules are the indispensable foundation of a fair society. As this publication shows, only a concerted effort across government can deliver this. The Cabinet Office will support this effort with vigour, coordinating policy, promoting the role of the third sector and ensuring that those on the margins of society are not left behind.

The Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP

NOTES

- 1** Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley (2004), Citizenship in Britain: Values, Participation and Democracy, CUP – the study found that 81 per cent of people surveyed said they were proud to be British; Communities and Local Government (2007) Citizenship Survey – the survey found 85 per cent of people feel they belong strongly to Britain
- 2** Henley Centre Headlight Vision (2007) Planning for Consumer Change Survey – the survey showed 61 per cent of people believe that “the quality of life in Britain is best improved by looking after the community’s interest rather than your own” – this has been a relatively stable statistic since 1997
- 3** Ipsos MORI (2008) Real Trends Survey – 79 per cent of people agree with the statement “I am one of those people who always manages to get back on their feet.”
- 4** Ipsos MORI (2008) Real Trends Survey – 78 per cent of people agree with the statement “I like to develop myself by trying new things out”; 83 per cent agree with the statement “I enjoy learning new things and skills.”
- 5** Ipsos MORI (2005) British Views On Respect – survey found 91 per cent of people are irritated by queue jumpers; 91 per cent by people not giving up a seat to an elderly/pregnant person on a train/bus; and 83 per cent by people swearing in public
- 6** Ipsos MORI (2005) British Views On Respect
- 7** Home Office (2008) Home Office quarterly crime and immigration tracker, August 2008, carried out by Ipsos MORI’ – survey showed 94 per cent of people believe making racist or bigoted remarks “not at all” or “not very” acceptable; 96 per cent believe the same of starting a fight when leaving a pub; 96 per cent believe the same of vandalising a phone box
- 8** Ipsos MORI (2008) Real Trends Survey
- 9** Communities and Local Government (2007), Citizenship Survey
- 10** Home Office (2008) Youth Crime Action Plan
- 11** Ipsos MORI (2008) Real Trends Survey
- 12** Home Office (2008) Crime in England and Wales 2007/08
- 13** Home Office (2007/8) British Crime Survey
- 14** Home Office (2008) Crime in England and Wales 2007/08
- 15** European Social Survey – MORI analysis; Home Office (2008) Crime in England and Wales 2007/08 – 16 per cent of people perceived there to be a high level of anti-social behaviour in their area in 2007/8, down from 18 per cent in 2006/07 and the lowest percentage since this measure began in 2001/02
- 16** Home Office (2008) Crime in England and Wales 2007/08
- 17** Home Office (2008) Crime in England and Wales 2007/08
- 18** Page B (Oct, 2008) ‘Does Britain need fixing?’, Prospect Magazine

- 19** Ipsos MORI (2007) Closing the Gaps: Crime and Public Perceptions the authors note at p3 “A number of studies show that media coverage of crime is biased towards the negative, a fact that is likely to both explain why perceptions are more negative than actual trends and to influence national more than local opinion”; see also Strategy Unit Analysis (2008) – 65 per cent of newspaper crime stories relate to violent crime, whilst these account for less than 25 per cent of all actual crime
- 20** The Cabinet Office (2008), Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime ('The Casey Review')
- 21** Communities and Local Government (2007) Citizenship Survey
- 22** Communities and Local Government (2007) Citizenship Survey
- 23** Communities and Local Government (2007) Citizenship Survey
- 24** Financial Times (2006) MBA choices that help make the world a better place
- 25** Ipsos MORI (2008) Real Trends Survey – Only 23 per cent of people surveyed agreed with the statement “There is always someone or something preventing me from making the most of my life”, compared to 38 per cent in 1997
- 26** Communities and Local Government (2008) Communities in control – Real people, real power Cm 7427
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