**Conservative Manifesto: Relevant policies to REC Members**

**Below is a summary of policies in the 2024 Conservative Party General Election manifesto most relevant to REC members. These have been directly taken from the manifesto and the specific wording is not necessarily the view of the REC.**

**Economy and Business**

* 2p cut to National Insurance.
* Abolish main rate of national insurance for the self employed.
* Maintain the National Living Wage in each year of the next Parliament at two-thirds of median earnings.
* Lift the employee threshold allowing more companies to be considered medium-sized.
* Continue to ease the burden of business rates for high street, leisure and hospitality businesses by increasing the multiplier on distribution warehouses that support online shopping over time.
* Keep the VAT threshold under review and explore options to smooth the cliff edge at £90,000.
* Retain key tax incentives that encourage small businesses to grow, including the Enterprise Investment Scheme, Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme, Venture Capital Trusts, Business Asset Disposal Relief, Agricultural Property Relief and Business Relief. They said they will not increase Capital Gains Tax.

**Jobs and Work**

* Reform disability benefits so they are better targeted.
* Accelerate the rollout of Universal Credit. All of those remaining on outdated legacy benefits to be moved onto Universal Credit, removing disincentives for them to work.
* Introduce tougher sanctions rules so people who refuse to take up suitable jobs after 12 months on benefits can have their cases closed and their benefits removed entirely.
* Give working parents 30 hours free childcare a week.

**Skills**

* Fund 100,000 new apprenticeships for young people, paid for by curbing the number of poor-quality university degrees that leave young people worse off.

**Immigration**

* Introduce a binding, legal cap on migration, set on work and family visas – to protect public services whilst bringing skills business and the NHS needs.
  + Cap will be set at a level that explicitly takes into account the costs and the benefits of migration.
  + The cap will fall every year of the next Parliament and cannot be breached.
  + Parliament will be given an annual vote on the level of the cap.
* No return to free movement of labour.
* Keep NHS Immigration Health Surcharge for migrants with a further requirement for them to complete a health check to determine if this should rise from the standard £1,035.
* Increase all visa fees and remove student discount to the Immigration Health Surcharge.
* Raise the Skilled Worker threshold and family income requirement with inflation to make sure they don’t undercut UK workers.

**Health & Social Care**

* Increase NHS spending above inflation every year, recruiting 92,000 more nurses and 28,000 more doctors, driving up productivity in the NHS and moving care closer to people’s homes.
* Work with public sector organisations including local authorities and NHS trusts and companies benefitting from government contracts to ensure that procurement opportunities are focused on SMEs in their local economies where possible and practical.
* Promote digital invoicing and improve enforcement of the Prompt Payment Code to support small businesses with the perennial challenge of cashflow, building on our creation of the Small Business Commissioner with powers to tackle unfavourable payment practices.

**Transport**

* Invest £36 billion in local roads, rail and buses to drive regional growth, including £8.3 billion to fill potholes and resurface roads, funded by cancelling the second phase of HS2.
* Deliver Northern Powerhouse Rail.
* Boost rail connectivity in the Midlands, with £1.75 billion to fund the Midlands Rail Hub in full. This will improve journey times and deliver more frequent rail services at 50 stations, benefiting over seven million people. Halve journey times between Nottingham and Leeds.
* Provide an additional £1 billion to support hundreds of new bus routes across the North and Midlands.
* Extend the £2 bus fare cap in England for the entirety of the next Parliament.