

# Blueprint for a Better Britain

## Executive Summary

---

A Programme for National Renewal — With the  
Delivery Architecture to Make It Real

Blueprint | 6knights.com  
March 2026 — Version 3.0

## Eight Numbers That Define Britain's Challenge

**£2.87tn**

National debt  
(~£102k per household)

**£111bn**

Annual debt interest  
(nearly 2x defence budget)

**£11,000**

Lost per worker per year  
vs. pre-2008 wage trend

**14 years**

Of real wage stagnation  
(2010–2024)

**99.8%**

Of major projects over  
budget, late, or underperforming

**45%**

"Almost never" trust  
government — record high

**4x**

UK industrial electricity  
cost vs. United States

**21,000**

Pages in the UK  
tax code

If the UK had merely grown at US rates since 2008, tax revenues today would be approximately **£150 billion higher per year** — enough to eradicate the deficit, increase defence spending, and cut taxes simultaneously.

Sources: ONS, OBR March 2026, IFS, Resolution Foundation, BSA 41, Ipsos, DESNZ, Said Business School, Tolley's. Full citations in the main document.

## SECTION 1

# The Diagnosis — Britain's Structural Failure

---

Britain is not a failed country. It is a country failing to realise what it already has — the world's second-ranked financial centre, 38% of global FX turnover, a £119 billion financial services trade surplus, and world-class universities. The dispute is not over Britain's assets but over what the nation has failed to do with them over the past generation.

### Four Interlocking Crises

Productivity. Output per hour grew just 2.4% over six years (2019–2025); US productivity surged 6.7%. GDP per head fell in Q3 and Q4 2025. Business investment: 18.6% of GDP — lowest in the G7. OBR forecasts 1.1% growth in 2026; KPMG says energy costs may halve even that to 0.7%.

Human cost. Real pay just 3.5% above 2010 levels — fourteen years of stagnation. Average worker earns £11,000 less than the pre-2008 trend. In Q3 2025, the UK suffered the largest fall in real household income per capita in the G7.

Fiscal trap. National debt: £2,871bn (93.1% of GDP). Debt interest: £111.2bn/year — nearly twice the defence budget. Gilt yields now exceed Italy and France. OBR forecasts debt rising to 96.5% of GDP by 2028–29 and the tax burden reaching a peacetime record of 38.5% by 2030–31.

Housing, infrastructure, and energy. England's cumulative shortfall: 2+ million homes. Only 0.2% of major projects delivered on time and budget. UK industrial electricity: 26.63p/kWh — highest in the developed world, 4x the US. Energy-intensive manufacturing fell 33.6% (2021–2024), a 35-year low.

### The Fiscal Cost of Inaction

If the UK had grown at US rates since 2008, annual tax revenues would be ~£150 billion higher. The electricity price penalty alone creates a £14–16 billion annual GDP drag and costs £5.5–6.5 billion in foregone tax revenue every year. High debt servicing crowds out investment, suppresses growth, reduces tax revenue, and increases borrowing in a self-reinforcing cycle.

### The Trust Crisis

45% of Britons "almost never" trust government (record high, +22pp since 2020). Only 9% trust politicians to tell the truth (40-year low). Among 25–34-year-olds: 2%. Only 14% believe things will be better for the next generation. The promise graveyard is long: 300,000 homes/year (never met, target set 2004), NHS 18-week wait (last met 2016), social care cap (legislated 2014, still not operating), HS2 (£37.5bn to £66bn+, northern leg cancelled).

## SECTION 2

# The Implementation Gap — Why Nothing Changes

---

The crucial question most policy documents evade: why, despite decades of explicit promises, nothing changes. In almost every case, the analysis was competent and the political mandate was sufficient. What failed was the institutional machinery of delivery — the specific mechanisms through which the British state absorbs and neutralises reform.

### Five Patterns of Failure

- The Planning Trap. 58% of DCOs face judicial review (1.4 years each). NSIP delivery +65% slower since 2012. Pre-construction 50% slower than European peers.
- Cost Estimation Failure. HS2: £37.5bn to £66bn+. Hinkley: £18bn to £46bn. 69% of UK road projects overrun (avg 66%).
- Political Cycle Disruption. Ministers average 2.1 years; major programmes take 5–15 years.
- Rhetoric-Resource Gap. Policies announced for news cycles without delivery resourcing.

- Institutional Capacity Erosion. 603 unaccountable ALBs. Only 8% of civil servants agreed poor performance is managed well.

### **The Nash Equilibrium and the Delivery Architecture**

Cummings describes a "bad Nash equilibrium": every actor behaves rationally but the system produces catastrophic outcomes. Officials prioritise process (which is rewarded) over results; they avoid visible failure (which ends careers) while invisible failure — the factory never built, the house never approved — carries zero consequences. The absorption thesis is substantially correct: any delivery unit without structural reform will be neutralised. Blair's PMDU, Cameron's Implementation Unit, and Cummings' own 2020 reforms were all absorbed or reversed. Breaking the equilibrium requires six structural changes:

- Parliamentary Risk-Appetite Statement — explicit trade-offs, not outsourced to courts
- PM-Chancellor Delivery Office — coercive authority over budgets, appointments, public reporting
- Civil Service Reform — performance-based progression, specialist tracks, open senior appointments
- Quango Rationalisation — presumption of abolition for 603 ALBs
- OBR Reform — mandatory growth impact assessment on all policy changes
- Transparency as Accountability — public quarterly scorecards making invisible failure visible

## **SECTION 3**

### **Five Changes to Start Now**

---

These five changes form an interlocking system: government reform makes the rest executable; planning reform lowers the time cost of investment; energy reform lowers the operating cost of production; tax and procurement reform reduces friction; and capital reform ensures domestic savings can back domestic scale. If any one remains broken, the others underperform. Cheap power with impossible planning still deters industry. More venture funding with broken delivery still produces stalled infrastructure and bureaucratic drag.

#### **Change 1: Fix How Government Delivers**

47% of central government services lack a digital pathway. Citizens spend 10.5 days/year on bureaucracy. AI transformation of four high-impact departments (HMRC, DWP, MoJ, Home Office) delivers £2.3–3.8bn in annual savings and 34,000–47,000 post reductions by 2031 (10-year NPV: £4.8–13.1bn). The £3.25bn Transformation Fund is committed — what's needed is governance to convert it into savings.

[What changes for you: Bureaucracy drops from 10.5 to under 3 days/year. HMRC enquiries resolved in 4 weeks, not 12.](#)

#### **Change 2: Build — Homes, Infrastructure, Planning**

England needs ~370,000 homes/year. Parliamentary Public Bills replace the DCO process for nationally significant projects, cutting consent from ~6 years to ~14 months. Community benefit payments make development locally popular. Mandatory Reference Class Forecasting prevents HS2-scale overruns. Estimated saving: £6.4bn/year in avoided delay costs.

[What changes for you: 10–15% lower house prices vs. trend over a decade. Communities receive direct benefit payments from nearby development.](#)

#### **Change 3: Cheap, Clean, Secure Power**

UK industrial electricity: 26.63p/kWh — highest in the IEA, 4x the US, 3.9x France. Near-term: abolish Carbon Price Support (saves £1.3bn/year), zero-rate VAT on electricity (~£65/household/year), transfer policy levies to general taxation. Medium-term: REMA wholesale market reform, expanded French interconnection. Long-term: new nuclear and long-duration

storage.

What changes for you: ~£80/year household bill relief immediately. Heat pump households save ~£490/year. Small manufacturer saves ~£19,700/year at French prices.

#### **Change 4: Simplify Tax and Procurement**

21,000-page tax code costs businesses £33.9bn/year in compliance. Year 1: £4.75bn from closing documented loopholes via annual Simplification Bill. Years 1–3: replace Stamp Duty with annual property tax; merge Income Tax and NI; transition business rates to land value system. 10% SME procurement set-aside opens ~£28bn in government contracts.

What changes for you: No five-figure Stamp Duty bill when moving home. Payroll admin halved. Startups access £28bn in government contracts.

#### **Change 5: Unlock Capital for Growth**

£2.9tn in pension assets, but US VC intensity is 3x higher per capita. Replace BBB with British Sovereign Capital (patient, risk-seeking). Abolish EIS funds and VCTs (£1.15bn/year cost); expand EMI to 500 employees / £120m gross assets (£2.65 return per £1 foregone). Consolidate 86 LGPS funds into ~10 megafunds. Raise auto-enrolment to 12%. Create Growth ISA.

What changes for you: Founders offer competitive equity to 500 employees. Average earners gain ~£6,000 from pension consolidation.

### **SECTION 4**

## **The Debate — Three Tiers of Readiness**

---

A policy document that claims all its proposals are ready for immediate implementation is not to be trusted. Real delivery requires ruthless sequencing and honest appraisal of capacity.

#### **Tier 1: Ready to Execute (Year 1)**

- Establish PM-Chancellor Delivery and Reform Office (executive action)
- Abolish Carbon Price Support (single legislative change — saves £1.3bn/year)
- Zero-rate VAT on domestic electricity (~£65/household/year)
- Deploy government AI — Layer 1 immediately, Layer 2 sequentially (£3.25bn committed)
- Planning fast-track for selected NSIPs (Heathrow as test case)
- Begin quango rationalisation (presumption of abolition for 603 ALBs)
- Accelerate pension fund consolidation (already in motion)

#### **Tier 2: Requires Design Work (Years 1–3)**

- Transfer policy levies from bills to general taxation
- Income Tax / NI merger (3-year phase)
- Parliamentary Public Bill framework for all NSIPs
- British Sovereign Capital institution (replacing BBB)
- REMA decision within this Parliament
- GOV.UK One Login as universal digital ID
- Community benefit payments, EIS/VCT abolition, Stamp Duty replacement

#### **Tier 3: Democratic Deliberation Required**

- Triple lock reform (£6bn/year additional cost; £45bn+ by 2050)
- ECHR / Human Rights Act reform
- Full energy market redesign
- Inheritance tax, House of Lords, devolution, immigration, size of the state

The existence of Tier 3 questions — genuinely hard choices about values — is not a reason for paralysis. It is a reason for humility, and for building deliberative processes that engage citizens with genuine choices rather than managed consensus.

## THE GROWTH ARITHMETIC

### What Happens Without Change

	1.1% growth (OBR central)	2.1% growth (pre-crisis norm)	Difference
GDP in 2036	~£3.8tn	~£4.3tn	+£500bn
Cumulative tax revenue	—	—	+£200bn
Debt-to-GDP	Above 90%	Toward 75%	15pp better

In human terms:

- 2.2 million missing first-time buyers will become 3 million
- 80,000–150,000 recoverable industrial jobs permanently offshored
- AI data centres built in Amsterdam and Dublin instead of Birmingham and Manchester
- Debt interest — nearly 2x the defence budget — continues crowding out investment
- Trust collapse deepens further (45% "almost never" trust government)

### The Architecture of Change

None of this is inevitable. Every problem identified has a known solution, demonstrated somewhere in the world. France built 56 nuclear reactors in 17 years, creating a structural cost advantage that persists for decades. Germany built the KfW — now one of the world's largest development banks. Singapore built a high-performance public sector with open appointments, competitive pay, and genuine accountability. Estonia built digital government where 99% of services are available online. The US built a deep-capital-formation ecosystem that turns university research into globally dominant companies.

Britain has demonstrated it can act decisively when it chooses to. The UK decarbonised its electricity grid faster than almost any other major economy. It built GOV.UK — still the world's most-cited example of government digital transformation. It created the OBR, now a global model for independent fiscal oversight. It ran the furlough scheme in weeks. The Copilot trial saved 20,000 civil servants 26 minutes a day. The civil service, at its best, is genuinely exceptional. The question is not capability — it is whether institutional incentives will be changed to make exceptional performance the norm rather than the exception.

#### The Five Delivery Essentials

- A Delivery Unit with structural authority — statutory, with power over reporting and vacancy controls
- Civil service reform in parallel — performance-based progression, specialist tracks, open appointments
- Transparency as accountability — public quarterly scorecards making invisible failure visible
- The "plan to do the plan" — obstacle maps: who blocks, what lever they control, how to defeat them
- Non-partisan governance — institutions designed to survive changes of government

**The diagnosis is clear. The data is unambiguous. The solutions exist and have been tested. The only remaining variable is political will – and the institutional machinery to convert that will into sustained delivery.**

**Britain can be better than this. The evidence says it should be.  
The question is whether it will be.**

---

Blueprint | 6knights.com — March 2026  
Full document: [6knights.com](https://6knights.com)