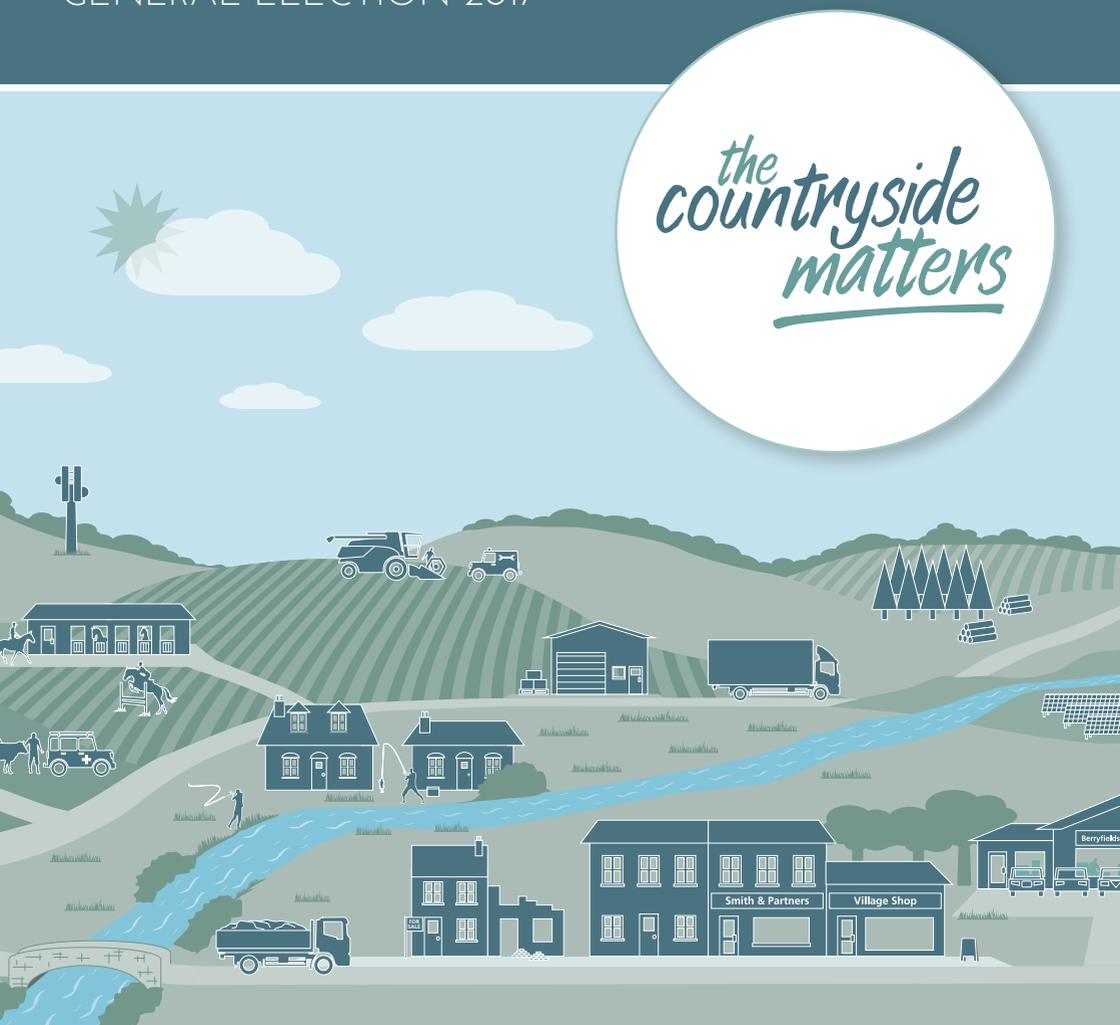


PRIORITIES FOR GOVERNMENT

GENERAL ELECTION 2017

the countryside matters



PRIORITIES FOR GOVERNMENT

GENERAL ELECTION 2017



CLA EXPLAINS

In coming months our elected representatives will make crucial decisions that will shape the future of the rural economy and its communities for generations to come. These are **priorities that we believe government should adopt** to show that they understand why the **countryside matters** and what is needed to ensure it thrives.



1 Deliver a Brexit that works for the countryside

- Commit to a fully funded policy that promotes productive and resilient agriculture and improves our environment, economy, communities and landscapes.
- Secure a trade deal that provides access to markets for our produce, without compromising our high safety and welfare standards.
- Commit to a comprehensive review of all EU regulations to ensure they remain fit for purpose once they have been safely transferred into domestic law.
- Ensure farmers and other rural businesses have access to the labour force they need.

2 Create the homes that rural areas need

- Encourage more small scale housing development, particularly by making better use of existing buildings.
- Provide incentives and opportunities for landowners to deliver more affordable housing for rent.
- Make property improvements more affordable through reduced VAT rates for the renovation and repair of private dwellings and zero rate conversion costs.
- Sort out energy efficiency rules to ensure they are clear, proportionate and encourage property owners to make the right investments.

3 Implement a simpler, more cost effective planning system in rural areas

- Require all rural local planning authorities to have local plans in place by 2018.
- Allow applicants to apply directly to the Planning Inspectorate in areas where there is no local plan in place.
- Increase availability of permitted development rights.
- Prevent outward encroachment of green belt designations into rural areas and promote effective use of land within it.

4 End the digital divide for rural communities

- Deliver universal 4G mobile coverage.
- Commit to regular increases in the minimum broadband speed set out in the universal service obligation.
- Provide more homes with fibre to the premises in rural areas.

5 Design a tax regime that encourages and does not discriminate against rural businesses

- Allow diversified rural businesses to register as a single business for tax purposes.
- Extend tax relief for research and development investment to unincorporated business.
- Introduce new capital allowances to encourage investment in rural businesses.
- Review business rates to deliver a fairer, more accurate rating system, for rural businesses.

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