

# **100 DAYS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH**

## **A draft summary of Conservative Party public health promises and their alignment with public health priorities**

UK Public Health Network

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

At the public health summit meeting on 8 October 2014, it was agreed that the development of a collaborative agenda would enable a fragmented profession to speak with greater clarity on measures needed to improve the public's health. An initial priority was to compile a list of public health asks for the first 100 days of the new national administration, following the general election in May 2015. This further investigation reports on the promises of the Conservative Party, as stated in its 2015 manifesto, and how these align with public health asks.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This analysis builds on the work done for the first 100 days of the new national administration in identifying public health priorities on the wider determinants of health. Promises were extracted from the [Conservative Party 2015 manifesto](#) and mapped against public health asks (as found in organisations' health manifestos) in order to look at the Party's potential position on key public health issues.

This analysis excludes Party promises on matters such as defence, migration and security.

## 3. FINDINGS

Conservative Party promises were found across all the key determinants of public health, although the depth and extent of support for improving public health appears limited in some areas. The Party promises action to support people in Britain across their life course from childhood through to retirement. The Party makes statements to *“eliminate child poverty and introduce better measures to drive real change in children's lives, by recognising the root causes of poverty: entrenched worklessness, family breakdown, problem debt, and drug and alcohol dependence.”* and to *“take action to reduce childhood obesity.”* It recognises *“sport's vital benefits to health”* and the Party is *“helping people to stay healthy by ending the open display of tobacco in shops, introducing plain-packaged cigarettes and funding local authority public health budgets.”* It will also *“take action to reduce childhood obesity and continue to promote clear food information.”*

The Party states that *“cutting the taxes of the lowest paid and helping them stand on their own two feet is the most effective poverty-tackling measure there is.”*

The top priorities for public health are to address the issues caused by alcohol consumption, smoking and obesity. However, these appear to attract the least number of pledges from the Conservative Party.

The full number of statements mapped against the wider determinants of health are shown in [Figure 1](#). Although the Party makes the most number of statements about

Employment & income, Education, and Energy, these do not necessarily indicate Conservative Party priorities.

Post-election statements made by the Prime Minister<sup>1</sup> and the Secretary of State for Health<sup>2</sup> to date indicate that initial priorities for health include:

- “Our commitment to free healthcare for everyone – wherever you are and whenever you need it.”
- “Full transparency over the quality of mental health services in every part of the country.”
- “We know we need a completely new approach to public health and preventable diseases. A real focus on healthy living.”
- “We must have proper joined up care built around what patients need.”
- “A new deal for GPs with more investment, more training and a more personal link with patients.”
- “A modern NHS working for you 7 days of the week – when you need it, where you need it.”
- “To keep our people healthy; to look after them when they fall ill; to care for the elderly with dignity and to ensure that free healthcare is always there whenever people need it most.”
- “To transform care outside hospitals - we need a step change in services offered through GP surgeries, community care and social care.”

Election promises in the ten topic areas felt to be a priority by public health organisations are mapped in [Figure 2](#).

Some correlation was made with priorities from government organisations and agencies across the UK. [Figure 3](#) maps Conservative Party promises against stated government organisation / agency priorities, although it does not show the degree of action being promised.

**Note:** This is a limited analysis, intended to inform debate by the UK Public Health Network on its priority asks for the first 100 days. It does not replace a detailed study of the Conservative Party manifesto or a more comprehensive political analysis. It is intended to be read in conjunction with *100 days for public health: A summary of public health priorities and their alignment with party political manifestos*.

Heather Lodge

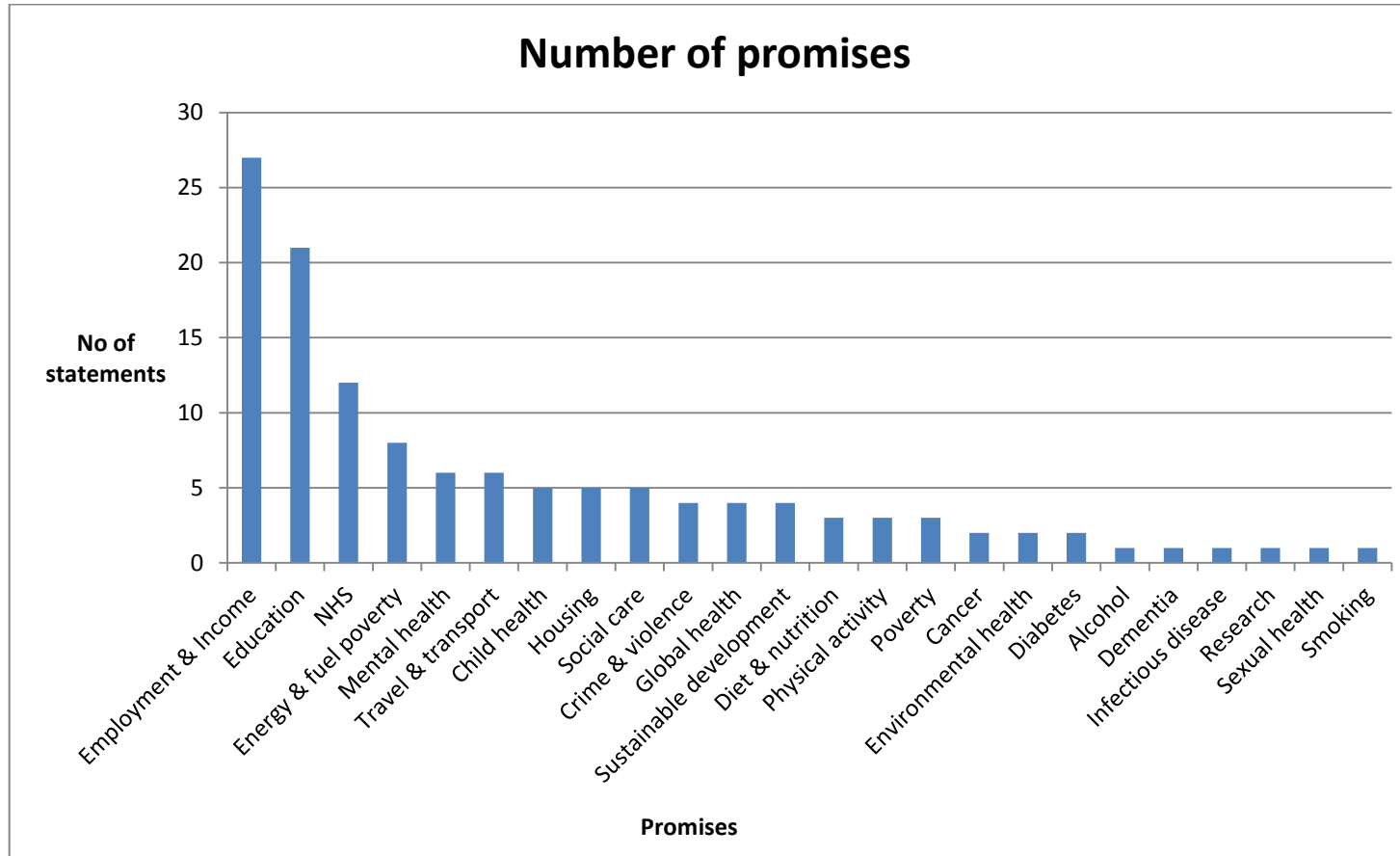
UK Public Health Network Co-ordinator

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<sup>1</sup> [Rt Hon David Cameron MP Plans for a seven-day NHS](https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-on-plans-for-a-seven-day-nhs). Speech given on 18 May 2015: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-on-plans-for-a-seven-day-nhs>

<sup>2</sup> Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP **Reappointment as Secretary of State for Health** 12 May 2015. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/health-secretary-jeremy-hunt-on-his-reappointment>

**Figure 1: Conservative Party manifesto requests by determinants of health**



**NB:**

Requests grouped under 'NHS' are related directly to the service and include funding, staffing, waiting lists etc.

**Figure 2: Conservative Party statements that may affect the wider determinants of health (according to the top 10 public health priorities).**

NB: Highlights indicate potential areas of agreement.

Issue	Topic	Conservative Party statements	Public health manifesto asks on this issue
<b>Alcohol</b>	Public control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sobriety orders available to all courts in England and Wales, enforced through new alcohol monitoring tags.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the blood alcohol limit for driving in England and Wales to 50mg/100ml, starting with drivers under the age of 21 / in line with Scotland &amp; N.I</li> <li>• Introduce the widespread use of sobriety orders</li> </ul>
<b>Smoking</b>	Standardised packaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping people to stay healthy by ending the open display of tobacco in shops, introducing plain-packaged cigarettes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement standardised packaging</li> </ul>
<b>Diet &amp; nutrition</b>	Food industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take action to reduce childhood obesity and continue to promote clear food information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrict opening of new fast food takeaways close to schools</li> <li>• Guidelines to assess the suitability of, or ban, food and beverage companies for sponsorship of public health initiatives</li> </ul>
	School food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing free meals to all infants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement School Food Plan</li> <li>• Ban the sale and consumption of energy drinks on school premises</li> </ul>
<b>Mental health</b>	Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforce the new access and waiting time standards for people experiencing mental ill-health,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce maximum waiting times for mental health services based on best outcomes and not short term availability</li> <li>• Commit to the Crisis Care Concordat including comprehensive liaison psychiatry services on hand around the clock in every hospital.</li> <li>• NHS in England to offer a full range of evidence based psychological therapies to everyone who needs them within 28 days of requesting a referral</li> </ul>

	Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide significant new support for mental health, benefiting thousands of people claiming out-of-work benefits or being supported by Fit for Work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer integrated health and employment support to people with mental health conditions who are out of work and seeking employment.</li> <li>• Implement workplace health initiatives</li> </ul>
	Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing funding for mental health care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue government funding for the Time to Change programme over the 2015-20 period.</li> <li>• Ensure national funding decisions are assessed for impact on the existing legislative commitment to both mental and physical health</li> <li>• Increase the overall NHS mental health budget by a minimum of 10 per cent in real terms by the end of the five year term</li> </ul>
	Parity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that mental and physical health conditions are given equal priority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make mental health services as accessible to people as physical health services, tackling stigma and being able to access services from a provider of their choice</li> </ul>
	Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure proper provision of health and community based places of safety for people suffering mental health crises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure everybody has safe and speedy access to quality crisis care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (first year)</li> </ul>
	Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that women have access to mental health support during and after pregnancy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all women have access to mental health support during, and after, pregnancy</li> <li>• Invest in parenting programmes across England.</li> </ul>
<b>Physical activity</b>	Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in participation and physical activity, recognising sport's vital benefits to health and to NHS England's campaign to prevent diabetes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinvest a fifth of the existing VAT on soft drinks, fast food and confectionery in activity programmes.</li> </ul>
	School sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All primary schoolchildren benefit from School Games supported with over £150 million of National Lottery and public money</li> <li>• Make sure all primary schoolchildren benefit from a minimum of two hours high-class sport and PE each week.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop policies for active communities and fitness programmes with schools, community groups and local authorities</li> <li>• Reinstate at least two hours per week of physical activity in all schools.</li> </ul>

	Uptake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase participation in sport by women and girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote physical activity beyond sport throughout the life course</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all primary schoolchildren benefit from School Games supported with over £150 million of National Lottery and public money a minimum of two hours high-class sport and PE each week.</li> <li>• Introduce tough new standards for literacy and numeracy in primary schools</li> <li>• Require secondary school pupils to take GCSEs in English, maths, science, a language and history or geography</li> <li>• Replace lower-level, classroom-based Further Education courses with high quality apprenticeships that combine training with experience of work and a wage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people need a post-16 offer that is relevant to needs and takes account of the national priorities, so that they are fully equipped for further study and the world of work</li> <li>• Introduce age appropriate, statutory and comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programmes across all primary and secondary schools, monitored by OFSTED to tackle SRE, drug &amp; alcohol issues and foster wellbeing</li> </ul>
	Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of money following your child into school will be protected.</li> <li>• Continue to provide the pupil premium, protected at current rates</li> <li>• Invest at least £7 billion over the next Parliament to provide good school places</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
	Higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abolishing the cap on higher education student numbers</li> <li>• You do not have to pay anything towards tuition while studying, and only start paying back if you earn over £21,000 per year</li> <li>• Introduce a national postgraduate loan system for taught masters and phd courses</li> <li>• Recognise universities offering the highest teaching quality</li> <li>• Encourage the development of online education as</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>



		<p>a tool for students,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage universities to offer more two-year courses</li> </ul>	
	School capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open at least 500 new free schools</li> <li>• Ensure a good primary school place for your child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce directly-elected Strategic Education Commissioners as a new 'middle tier' who have responsibility for ensuring sufficient school capacity</li> <li>• A coherent and equitable approach to the provision of sufficient good quality places for all statutory school-aged pupils</li> </ul>
	School meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide free meals to all infants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement School Food Plan</li> </ul>
	Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the National Leaders of Education programme</li> <li>• Expect every teacher to be trained not just in how to tackle serious behaviour issues, but also in how to deal with the low level disruption that stops children from learning properly</li> <li>• Supporting the creation of an independent College of Teaching</li> <li>• Train an extra 17,500 maths and physics teachers over the next five years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure mental health education forms a key part of training for teachers and school nurses.</li> </ul>
<b>Employment &amp; Income</b>	Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace the Jobseeker's Allowance for 18-21 year-olds with a Youth Allowance that will be time-limited to six months, after which young people will have to take an apprenticeship, a traineeship or do daily community work for their benefits</li> <li>• Ensure that 18-21 year olds no longer have an automatic entitlement to Housing Benefit.</li> <li>• Freeze working age benefits for two years from April 2016, with exemptions for disability and pensioner benefit plus maternity and statutory sick pay.</li> <li>• Deliver Universal Credit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the demand for foodbanks by ending costly delays and poor decision-making in the benefits system</li> <li>• Protect families from rising living costs by restoring the value of children's benefits and protecting them with a triple lock, and poverty-proofing the school day</li> <li>• Remove Child Benefit from the benefit cap and scrap the bedroom tax</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower the maximum amount that a single household can claim in benefits each year from £26,000 to £23,000 with exemptions for Disability Living Allowance or the Personal Independence Payment</li> <li>• Keep the triple lock pension system</li> <li>• Maintain all the current pensioner benefits including Winter Fuel Payments, free bus passes, free prescriptions and TV licences for the next Parliament, while implementing the "temperature test" for Winter Fuel Payment, so that expats in hot countries no longer receive it.</li> </ul>	
	Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim to halve the disability employment gap: removing barriers that stop women and disabled people from participating in our workforce.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
	Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll-out our innovative Help to Grow scheme, which will plug a £1 billion finance gap for firms that are looking to expand, invest and take on new employees.</li> <li>• Deliver more bespoke Growth Deals with local councils, where locally supported, and back Local Enterprise Partnerships to promote jobs and growth.</li> <li>• Create another two million jobs over the next Parliament, support business to keep creating 1,000 jobs a day over the next five years</li> <li>• Deliver three million more apprenticeships</li> <li>• Jobcentre Plus advisers will work with schools and colleges to supplement careers advice</li> <li>• Aim to make Britain the best place in Europe, and one of the top five worldwide, to do business by 2020</li> <li>• Treble our successful Start Up Loans programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>

	Financial services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support the credit union movement in making financial services more accessible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>
	Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require companies with more than 250 employees to publish the difference between the average pay of their male and female employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back working parents by helping them bring home a decent income &amp; strengthening universal credit</li> <li>Subject all new government policies to a “Family Test” that assesses the impact of any initiative on family income, stability and wellbeing</li> </ul>
	Living/minimum wage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the National Minimum Wage and want to see further real-terms increases in the next Parliament, on course for a Minimum Wage that will be over £8 by the end of the decade. Personal Allowance automatically rises in line with the National Minimum Wage.</li> <li>Eradicate abuses of workers, such as non-payment of the Minimum Wage, exclusivity in zero hours contracts and exploitation of migrant workers.</li> <li>Support the Living Wage and will continue to encourage businesses and other organisations to pay it whenever they can afford it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give everyone in paid employment and training a living wage.</li> <li>Increase the National Minimum Wage rate for those aged under 21 to the same level as those aged 21 and over</li> </ul>
	Taxation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No increases in VAT, Income Tax or National Insurance, cut Income Tax, increase the tax-free Personal Allowance</li> <li>Abolished employers' National Insurance contributions (NICs) for young apprentices under 25</li> <li>Raise the 40p tax threshold to £50,000</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>
	Unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abolish long-term youth unemployment, and make sure that all young people are either earning or learning, cutting red tape, lowering taxes on jobs and enterprise, getting young people into work, boosting apprenticeships and investing in science and technology</li> <li>Provide support to those 16 –17 year olds still not in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the number of unemployed people by between a third and half.</li> </ul>

		education, employment or training	
<b>Energy &amp; fuel poverty</b>	Air pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do more to tackle air pollution and clean up our rivers and waterways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New national air quality strategy with tighter air quality objectives, reverse the incentives for diesel and encourage an increase in more sustainable private and public transport including 'active travel' and hybrid and electric vehicles</li> <li>• Meet legal duty to protect the population from the harmful affects of air pollution under EU regulation</li> </ul>
	Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the goal of limiting global warming to two-degrees firmly in reach and continue to support the UK Climate Change Act.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and facilitate local initiatives both to reduce climate change and to mitigate its effects.</li> <li>• Ensure that social justice, equality and climate change sit the heart of all planning decisions.</li> </ul>
	Fuel poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that every home and business in the country has a Smart Meter by 2020, delivered as cost-effectively as possible, so consumers have instant, accurate bills and can switch to an alternative provider within one day</li> <li>• Support low-cost measures on energy efficiency</li> <li>• Goal of insulating a million more homes over the next five years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strategy to end fuel poverty that sets targets for all relevant government departments</li> </ul>
	Sustainable energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the safe development of shale gas, and ensure that local communities share the proceeds through generous community benefit packages.</li> <li>• Provide start-up funding for promising new renewable technologies and research, but will only give significant support to those that clearly represent value for money.</li> <li>• Significant expansion in new nuclear and gas; backing good-value green energy; and pushing for more new investment in UK energy sources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a cross-national approach to meet climate change targets, including a rapid move to 100% renewables and a zero-carbon energy system.</li> <li>• Help community energy realise its potential</li> <li>• Long-term, effective policies on sustainable energy</li> </ul>
	Taxation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End any new public subsidy for [windfarms] and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use carbon tax revenues to cover the costs of making the</li> </ul>

		<p>change the law so that local people have the final say on windfarm applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We abolished Labour's fuel duty escalator, and instead have frozen fuel duty</li> </ul>	<p>housing stock super energy efficient</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address the funding of official controls, eg 'fee for fault' or 'polluter pays' principle for all types and sizes of business</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	Affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200,000 Starter Homes which will be sold at a 20 per cent discount, and will be built exclusively for first time buyers under the age of 40</li> <li>• Extend our Help to Buy Equity Loan scheme &amp; Right to Buy to Housing Association tenants to double the number of first-time buyers</li> <li>• Deliver 275,000 additional affordable homes by 2020</li> <li>• Offer 10,000 new homes to rent at below market rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A long-term cross-party investment strategy preserving, protecting and enhancing the nation's stock of affordable housing, including social housing</li> <li>• Build half a million more homes</li> </ul>
	New housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a Brownfield Fund to unlock homes on brownfield land for additional housing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build half a million more homes</li> </ul>
<b>Travel &amp; transport</b>	Active travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double the number of journeys made by bicycle and will invest over £200 million to make cycling safer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an ambitious cycling &amp; walking investment strategy</li> </ul>
	Air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest £500 million over the next five years to achieve zero emission in cars &amp; vans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw up a new national air quality strategy with tighter air quality objectives, reverse the incentives for diesel and encourage an increase in more sustainable private and public transport including 'active travel' and hybrid and electric vehicles</li> </ul>
	Driving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest £15 billion in roads, add 1,300 extra lane miles to roads, improve over 60 problem junctions</li> <li>• Continue to provide enough funding to fix around 18 million potholes nationwide between 2015 and 2021.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inject £1 billion a year into a much needed programme to address the pothole backlog</li> <li>• Introduce Graduated Licensing Schemes for novice drivers of all ages</li> <li>• Reduce the blood alcohol limit for driving in England and Wales to 50mg/100ml, starting with drivers under age 21</li> </ul>

	Public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest a record £13 billion in transport for the North.</li> <li>• Invest £38 billion in our railway network in the five years to 2019 .. electrify the main rail routes to the South West &amp; the North, the Midland main line and improve connections to East Anglia. Plus High Speed 2 &amp; 3 and Crossrail</li> <li>• Keep commuter rail fares frozen in real terms for the whole of the next Parliament, regulated fares will only be able to rise by Retail Price Inflation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve access to transport and the built environment.</li> </ul>

**Figure 3: Government priorities and Conservative Party pledges across all four nations 2014/15 .**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>England</b>	<b>Wales</b>	<b>Scotland</b>	<b>NI</b>	<b>Conservative pledge</b>
Alcohol	x		x		x
Child health	x	x	x	x	x
Commissioning				x	
Communicable diseases		x		x	x
Communities			x	x	
Delivery of healthcare	x	x	x	x	x
Dementia	x				x
Economic	x				x
Emergency preparedness		x		x	
Employment & income			x	x	x
Evidence-based practice		x		x	
Government leadership	x	x			
Health behaviour	x			x	
Health improvement		x			
Health inequalities / poverty	x	x	x	x	x
Health protection	x				
Health workforce		x			
Housing			x		x
Mental health	x		x	x	x
Obesity	x				x
Primary care		x			x
Quality of care	x	x		x	
Research & technology	x			x	x
Screening & immunisation		x		x	x
Smoking	x	x	x	x	x
Social care	x				x
Travel & transport			x		x