



**Our plan to ensure  
Britain lives  
within its means**

# Our five-point plan for holding the Government to reducing public spending to 36% of GDP by 2020

*Point 1.  
Promote the  
intellectual  
case*

*Point 2.  
Expose  
wasteful  
spending*

*Point 3.  
Hold  
politicians to  
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*Point 4.  
Push our  
message in  
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*Point 5.  
Rally  
taxpayers to  
support our  
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# Now is the time to get Britain living within its means again



When the TaxPayers' Alliance was founded in 2004, a cosy consensus had emerged amongst the political elite in favour of ever higher public spending. Against a rosy economic backdrop, the then Labour Government went on a spending and borrowing binge with the Conservative Opposition pledging to match their spending commitments. At the time, the TaxPayers' Alliance was a lone voice in calling for restraint.

Eleven years and an economic crash later, we are still feeling the effects of that binge: even now, politicians are spending tens of billions of pounds more than they are raising in revenue each year, which means the national debt will still be rising every second of every day pretty much until the end of this decade.

Thankfully, the TaxPayers' Alliance has helped to turn the tide of political and public opinion. Attitudes have changed: most people now accept that public spending did get out of control under the stewardship of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown and today's Conservative Government has stated its intention to balance the nation's books and get the country living within its means. These are warm and welcome words, of course, but actions speak far louder than words.

This Government's own plans have public spending being reduced to 36.3 per cent of GDP by 2019-20 and it is going to be incumbent on us to hold them to that and ensure that they act accordingly. History has taught us how easy it is for those supposedly committed to fiscal responsibility to turn on the spending taps and disregard the consequences.

And then there are the likes of Jeremy Corbyn and his acolytes who simply fail to face up to economic realities, supporting policies that we thought had been consigned to the dustbin of history back in the 1980s. The fact that some are proposing exorbitant spending and punitive taxation once again only goes to demonstrate that there are no permanent victories in the battle of ideas: we must always be on our guard and ready to fight those battles anew.

It has therefore never been more important for the voice of the TaxPayers' Alliance to be heard loud and clear as we seek to make our political leaders do the right thing by current and future taxpayers

That is why you have in your hands our plan to get Britain living within its means once again: I hope you will read it, promote it and support us as we seek to implement it.

**Jonathan Isaby**  
October 2015



**Jonathan Isaby**  
Chief Executive  
@isaby



## Contact us

The TaxPayers' Alliance, 55 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3QL

Tel: 020 7998 1450 Email: [info@taxpayersalliance.com](mailto:info@taxpayersalliance.com)

Facebook: [taxpayersalliance](https://www.facebook.com/taxpayersalliance) Twitter: [@the\\_tpa](https://twitter.com/the_tpa)

[www.taxpayersalliance.com](http://www.taxpayersalliance.com)

Launched in 2004 by Matthew Elliott and Andrew Allum, the TaxPayers' Alliance is Britain's independent grassroots campaign for reforming taxes, cutting spending and protecting taxpayers.

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*Point 1.  
Promote the  
intellectual  
case*

# Our plan for reducing public spending

Our plan for getting the country living within its means is underpinned by rigorously researched proposals to reduce public spending over the coming years. Published in March 2015, in advance of the general election, *The Spending Plan* was a landmark report for the TaxPayers' Alliance, which set out billions of pounds of savings to help balance the nation's books.

Our team scoured every area in which the Government spends taxpayers' money in order to identify where savings could be made and came up with no fewer than 41 headline measures, with some of the key proposals listed below.

The 41 proposals were split across two possible programmes, a first which included 24 measures that would see public spending reduced from 40.5 per cent of GDP in 2014-15 to 35.2 per cent of GDP in 2019-20, the level forecast by the Office for Budget Responsibility in December 2014. The second, incorporating all 41 measures, would see spending reduced to 31.7 per cent of GDP by 2020-21, the level at which the recommendations of the 2020 Tax Commission could be implemented in full (see page 16 for further details).

As explained on page 8, the Government's own projections have public spending being reduced to 36.3 per cent of GDP by the end of this Parliament, so ministers would not even have to adopt all of our ideas in order to reach that point.



*The Spending Plan* was published in March 2015 after ten months of painstaking research

## Government structures

There are too many Whitehall departments. Some would not be missed if they were abolished while others are carrying out functions which are simply superfluous or piling costs on taxpayers with unwelcome interventions and regulations. Meanwhile, there has thus far been little smoke from the much-anticipated but long overdue "bonfire of the quangos".

- Abolish the Department for International Development, scrap development aid and transfer humanitarian responsibilities to the FCO and MoD – **Saving of £15.3 billion by 2020-21**
- Abolish the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and reassign necessary functions – **Saving of £4.5 billion by 2020-21**
- Abolish the Department of Culture, Media and Sport – **Saving of £2.7 billion by 2020-21**
- Abolish the Department of Energy and Climate Change and reassign necessary functions – **Saving of £358 million by 2020-21**
- Cut the number, scope and budgets of quangos and public bodies – **Saving of £396 million by 2020-21**

## Public sector pay

Despite the recent restraint in public sector pay, statistics consistently demonstrate the existence of a pay premium for public sector workers compared to their counterparts in the private sector. Taxpayers frankly shouldn't be expected to pay for higher wages and better conditions for public sector workers over and above what they might otherwise expect to earn in the private sector.

- Scrap national pay bargaining – **Saving of £5.8 billion by 2020-21**
- Cut annual leave entitlements where overly generous – **Saving of £1.4 billion by 2020-21**
- Establish an excess sickness rate penalty to bring public sector rates into line with the private sector – **Saving of £774 million by 2020-21**



# Pensions and pensioner benefits

Spending on pensions has risen inexorably with an ageing population. Adjusted for inflation, spending on the state pension and pension credit has doubled since 1996 and is approaching £100 billion a year. When it was introduced in 1908, the state pension age was 70 and average life expectancies were much lower. Even when lowered to 65 in 1925, most people could not expect to live long enough to claim a pension. By contrast, life expectancy is now high and rising rapidly and the scale of spending commitments for pensioners means that no government serious about getting a grip on spending can afford to ignore pension reform.

- Freeze the basic State Pension and minimum income guarantee in 2016-17, then uprate it in line with the Consumer Prices Index – **Saving of £10 billion by 2020-21**
- Raise the State Pension age to 67 by 2021 – **Saving of £2.4 billion by 2020-21**
- Means test Winter Fuel Payments – **Saving of £1.4 billion by 2020-21**
- Target free bus passes for the elderly on those who genuinely need them – **Saving of £553 million by 2020-21**

## Welfare

The welfare bill has also grown at an alarming rate and has fostered a worrying dependency culture which has failed both benefits recipients and the taxpayers footing the bills. Far too often we also see “fiscal churn”, whereby money is taken away from individuals only to be then given back to them in benefits. This act doesn’t leave recipients better off than if the government had simply left the money in their pockets in the first place, especially given that they have to fund the administrative costs of the churn.

- Abolish Child Benefit and increase the child element of the Child Tax Credit to address child poverty concerns – **Saving of £3.1 billion by 2020-21**
- Cut Child Tax Credits to their 2003-04 level in real terms – **Saving of £5.9 billion by 2020-21**
- Flatten Housing Benefit rates across expensive areas to cut 10% off bills – **Saving of £2.7 billion by 2020-21**
- Relax planning restrictions that inflate housing costs to cut Housing Benefit bills – **Saving of £4.8 billion by 2020-21**

## Health

Another by-product of an ageing population is a burgeoning health budget and the current funding model for the NHS is simply unsustainable in the long term. In lieu of more significant reform to mimic a European insurance-based model that delivers better healthcare than the NHS, we have to find ways to save money. It is also important that patients appreciate that healthcare is not “free” – they pay a lot of money for it.

- Increase the extent of charges in the NHS – **Saving of £9.4 billion by 2020-21**
- Raise the efficiency of NHS estates to match the top 25% – **Saving of £3.6 billion by 2020-21**
- Renegotiate contracts to cut excessive pay for GPs – **Saving of £1.1 billion by 2020-21**
- Stop prescribing branded medicines where generics are suitable – **Saving of £211 million by 2020-21**
- Reform patient list auditing to cut NHS ‘ghost patients’ – **Saving of £147 million by 2020-21**



Research Director Alex Wild and Political Director Dia Chakravarty discuss the details of *The Spending Plan* in preparation for a broadcast interview

## A selection of other measures

- Shrink grants to Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales in line with England and cut Scotland’s grant to match its relative prosperity compared to Wales – **Saving of £10.4 billion by 2020-21**
- Withdraw UK funding for EU agriculture and fisheries programmes and spend it directly – **Saving of £2.8 billion by 2020-21**
- Scrap universal free school meals for pupils in reception to year 2 – **Saving of £855 million by 2020-21**
- Scrap trade unions’ subsidies of facility time, grants and office space – **Saving of £97 million by 2020-21**
- Repeal the Equality Act 2010 – **Saving of £50 million by 2020-21**

## Point 2. Expose wasteful spending

# Uncovering waste at every level of government

The *Spending Plan* exposed a number of high-level budget lines where central government could make changes and deliver significant savings.

But that is by no means the extent to which taxpayers' money is being wasted by politicians and bureaucrats. From the lowliest town hall, through an alphabet soup of quangos, right up to Whitehall departments and European Union institutions, we see examples of our cash being squandered day in, day out.

Sometimes it is TaxPayers' Alliance Freedom of Information requests which bring the waste to public attention, while other times it is tip-offs from supporters around the country or digging by determined journalists which draw attention to the ways in which our money has been misspent.

We constantly keep our beady eyes on all who are spending taxpayers' money. Whether the amount in question runs into millions or just a few hundred pounds, it is still money that has been taken in tax which would have been better left in our pockets.

On these pages are just a small selection of recent examples which demonstrate that there is considerable waste to be rooted out of existing budgets at every level of government...

### Speaker's travel bill an 'obscene waste'

John Bercow has been accused of "obscene waste" by the TaxPayers' Alliance after asking to be chauffeured in a car for a journey of barely 1,200 yards from one end of Whitehall to the other.

The Commons Speaker also spent £172 on a taxi to take him to a meeting at the House of Commons. The Speaker's travel costs have been disclosed following a Freedom of Information (FOI) request by the Press Association.

The tax has been widely criticised for subsidising the Speaker's private life. In the wake of a landmark Court of Appeal ruling on the Speaker's immunity, the Speaker's travel costs have been disclosed.

Commons Speaker John Bercow.

Above: The Speaker of the House of Commons, John Bercow, charged the taxpayer £172 to be chauffeured in a car for a journey of barely 1,200 yards from one end of Whitehall to the other.



Above: Councillors retiring from now defunct local authorities in Northern Ireland were handed £2.2 million in "severance payments".



Above: In three years the BBC racked up a bill of £1 million on first class train fares for 13,000 trips.

The Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority spent £70,000 on opinion research by ComRes to establish what voters thought about the level of MPs' pay. They concluded it was "broadly fair" – only for IPSA to disregard the results of their consultation and press ahead with a 10 per cent rise regardless.



Above: The European Union spent more than £15 million on its "Parliamentarium" in Brussels, a propaganda palace aiming to present the history of the EU to its citizens. It includes a light installation entitled "Sky of Opinions" and, according to the official blurb, "consists of carefully harmonised narrative spaces, which lend three-dimensional expression to the contents of the exhibition". To add insult to injury, its construction overran by three years and nearly £5 million.

### £320k for vote chief who quit

By STEVE HAWKES

THE Electoral Commission chief executive will get a £320,389 "golden goodbye" from taxpayers – despite choosing to go. Peter Wardle quits this month after more than ten years in charge of the elections watchdog. Last night its annual report revealed he will get £219,608 in a "compensation payment".



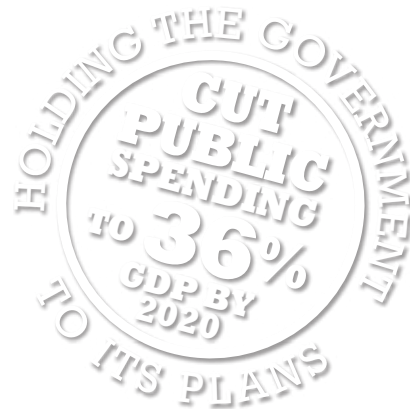
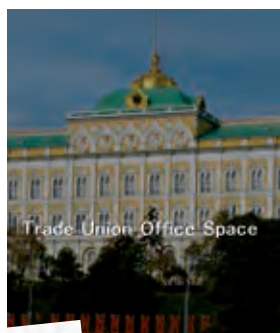
He will also receive £100,781 to make up for the hit on his pension by choosing to take "early retirement". But the Taxpayers' Alliance' Jonathan Leaby called for an end to "lucrative leaving presents". He said: "When we're trying to save money everywhere else, such obscene payouts are simply unacceptable."

Above: Electoral Commission Chief Executive, Peter Wardle, who chose to take early retirement, was nonetheless given a taxpayer-funded "golden goodbye" worth more than £320,000.



Right: TPA research found that councils, quangos and other public sector bodies across the UK are giving trade unions dedicated office space running to at least 273,753 square feet – more than the total floor space of the Grand Kremlin Palace in Moscow. Despite the space being worth millions of pounds, barely £300,000 of charges for this valuable space could be identified.

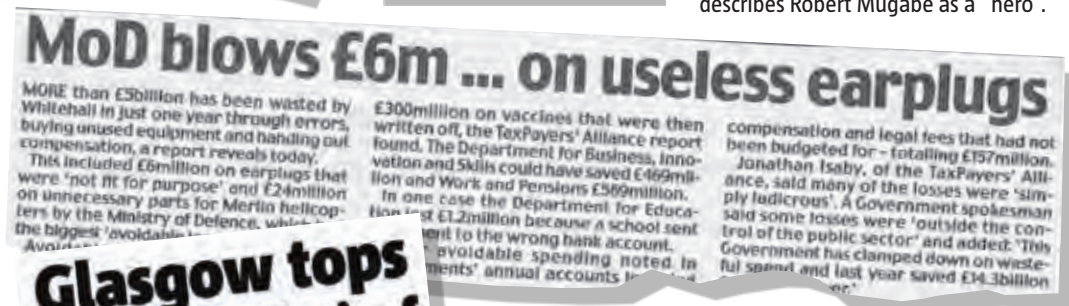
Below: Despite having to make savings, councils in Scotland alone are still spending almost £200 million a year on external consultants.



Left: The European Development Fund, managed by the European Commission and funded by British taxpayers to the tune of more than £437 million in 2013, spent more than £150,000 on a programme in Tanzania which included trapeze, acrobatics, and juggling lessons, while it handed more than £350,000 to the Culture Fund Zimbabwe Trust, which funds artists in the country, and whose Chief Executive describes Robert Mugabe as a "hero".



Above: TPA research revealed that local councils across the UK collectively own at least 2,586 farms, 407 golf courses, 378 pubs and 174 hotels. Other assets in the hands of local authorities include a wet fish stall, a cheese factory and a pigeon loft.



Above: The Ministry of Defence wrote off more than £3 billion in a year as "losses", including a large batch of earplugs bought for £6 million which were found to be "not fit for purpose".



Left: Our most recent Town Hall Rich List revealed that at least 2,195 council employees were on remuneration of more than £100,000, of whom 549 enjoyed a package worth more than £150,000. No fewer than 35 were on an annual deal worth in excess of £250,000. The authority with the highest number of employees in receipt of six-figure remuneration was Glasgow City Council, where 32 staff had annual deals worth more than £100,000.



Above: The NHS has spent nearly £350,000 on removing tattoos for people who changed their mind about their body art.



Left: The Green Investment Bank, the taxpayer-backed funding vehicle for environmentally-friendly projects, spent more than £200,000 on domestic air travel in just a year.

Left: The Foreign Office contributed £5,000 towards the production of an Armenian TV quiz show based on Who wants to be a Millionaire?

### Point 3. Hold politicians to their promises

# Keeping our leaders on the right track

The greatest impact we can ever have is when politicians and policy-makers take our ideas on board and put them into action – and on pages 20-21 you can see a number of examples of how TaxPayers' Alliance ideas and proposals have been adopted and become government policy.

But in order to reach that point, there is always a lot of hard work to be done, liaising with political figures from across the spectrum, forming alliances and persuading decision-makers of the merits of our case.

If politicians do appear to be on the right track, then it is our duty to ensure that they do not veer off course in an unwelcome direction. And this is exactly where we find ourselves in relation to our plan to get Britain living within its means once again.

As the graph below demonstrates, the Office for Budget Responsibility's projections for the Government are for public spending to be reduced as a proportion of GDP each year during the current five-year Parliament. This is what George Osborne has announced and this is exactly the right course to be taking.

As of the Summer Budget 2015, the projection is for public spending to be down to 36.3 per cent of GDP by 2019-20 and this is the figure on which we will judge the Government's deficit reduction programme. If they hit 36.3 per cent or (ideally) lower in 2019-20, they will have succeeded and done the right thing by taxpayers.

But if the 36.3 per cent figure is missed and that target is allowed to drift over the course of the Parliament, they will have failed and we will not shy away from calling them out for such a failure.

It is unquestionably our overarching mission between now and 2020 to hold ministers to that projected reduction in public spending.

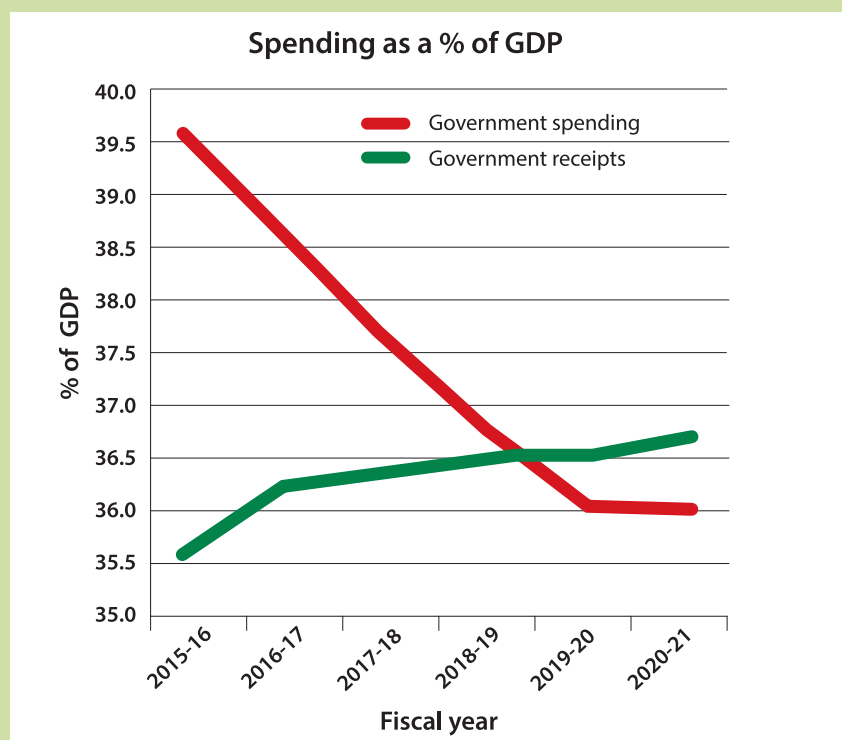
We have put ministers on watch and told them face to face that this is the benchmark on which they will be judged; and this is also what we are conveying to backbenchers and opposition politicians whenever we sit down with them too.



Matt Hancock MP made his first public appearance as the new Paymaster General at our post-election conference in May 2015. In this role he is responsible for ensuring government departments provide better value for taxpayers' money.



Jonathan Isaby meets Greg Hands MP who, as Chief Secretary to the Treasury, is the Cabinet Minister with overall responsibility for government spending.





# Getting a hearing in the corridors of power

We will always seek to enjoy constructive relations with politicians on all sides in both the House of Commons and House of Lords – as well as those running local authorities around the country and those sitting in the European Parliament and devolved parliaments and assemblies throughout the UK.

Whenever we publish new research, we ensure that all interested parliamentarians receive briefings on our findings or proposals, with senior team members following up with meetings in person. We regularly contribute written evidence to parliamentary select committees and have given oral evidence to such committees on a number of occasions.

We also feed our ideas into the Treasury, the Downing Street Policy Unit and other government departments as appropriate, keeping ministers and their advisers abreast of our work.

These efforts behind the scenes are vital to ensuring that the voice of taxpayers is heard loud and clear in the corridors of power.

This means that the influence of the TaxPayers' Alliance is keenly felt. Over the last few years, our research has been cited with increasing regularity in parliamentary debates and such is the authoritative nature of our work that on several occasions ministers have even referenced TPA papers when the Government's own army of civil servants have been unable to answer parliamentary questions!



Alex Wild, Jonathan Isaby and Research Fellow Rory Meakin take parliamentarians and their staff through our *Spending Plan* proposals at a House of Commons briefing

## What they've said about us...

**Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP,  
Secretary of State for Business,  
Innovation and Skills**

*"Since its inception, the TaxPayers' Alliance has made an important contribution to public debate and national campaigning."*



**David Gauke MP,  
Financial Secretary to the Treasury**

*"At a time when there is no shortage of lobby groups calling for more public spending in particular areas, the TaxPayers' Alliance has been an invaluable corrective in defending the interests of taxpayers."*



**Rt Hon Michael Gove MP,  
Lord Chancellor**

*"There is no doubt that the public purse is more carefully spent thanks to the TPA's work."*



**Kate Hoey MP,  
Labour MP and former minister**

*"The TaxPayers' Alliance plays an important role in keeping us on our toes and reminding us at all times that the money that we allocate does not belong to the Government – it is the public's and must be used wisely."*



**Nigel Farage MEP, Leader of the  
UK Independence Party**

*"There is no doubt that the debate about public spending in this country has been invigorated by the work of the TaxPayers' Alliance."*



Point 4.  
Push our  
message in  
the media

# Getting seen and heard in print and on air

While speaking directly to both politicians and the public is important, the media has also always played a crucial role in helping us to communicate our messages and push our campaign forward. And as we seek to make the case for reducing public spending, it is more important than ever that we make an impact in the media.

Whenever one of our reports is featured in a newspaper or on TV or radio, or a journalist seeks our comments to include in a story, we are reaching millions of people and shaping the news agenda.

Ever since our founding back in 2004, we have made it our business to give taxpayers a voice in the media. We achieve this through hard work on a number of fronts:

- **Availability** – Our media hotline number has remained the same for over a decade and is an essential contact number for thousands of journalists up and down the country. It is manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so reporters know that one of our campaign team will always be on hand to take their call.
- **Accessibility** – The TPA office in the heart of Westminster is situated just three minutes from the TV and radio studios where all the nation's main broadcasters have a base. This means that our spokesmen can be on air within minutes of a call coming from a producer seeking a guest.
- **Rigour** – Journalists know that our reports are based on rigorous research which stands up to scrutiny, so they know that they can rely on us for accurate statistics.
- **Cultivation** – Our team has built up relationships with a whole range of journalists, publications and programmes over the years, which helps to ensure we get a hearing in the right places.
- **Professionalism** – Journalists know that when they call us for comment on a story, they will get a well-informed, punchy response that adds an important dimension to their story.

We naturally like to see our work cited in the big national papers with readerships running into the millions – and will occasionally work with a specific journalist or title on an exclusive story.

But while we prize national attention in the print media, we also value the opportunity to be heard in local and regional newspapers. When we are exposing wasteful spending at a local level, it is often publications such as the *Yorkshire Post*, *Express & Star* or *Western Morning News* which are best placed to get our messages across.

Likewise, you will see our spokesmen popping up on a whole range of TV and radio programmes: local, regional, national and even international. Our Political Director, Dia Chakravarty, has appeared on the BBC's flagship discussion programme *Question Time* twice in the last year, while other members of the team regularly stand up for taxpayers on Sky News and the BBC News Channel, as well as programmes like *Newsnight*, *Channel Four News* and *Dispatches*.

So continue to keep an eye and an ear out for the TPA making waves in the media, arguing in particular that the country should adopt our plan and start living within its means once again.



Dia Chakravarty speaks up for taxpayers as a panellist on BBC One's *Question Time*



Jonathan Isaby raises concerns about the cost of a proposed tidal lagoon in Swansea Bay on Sky News



Alex Wild is interviewed about council waste on BBC One's *Sunday Politics*



Trevor Kavanagh,

Associate Editor and columnist, *The Sun*

"The TaxPayers' Alliance is to public spending what Dyno-Rod is to the public drains – it probes the spent and occasionally corrupt waste of elected and unelected government officials. Its great service is to dig out the most shocking nuggets and, to the enormous gratitude of journalists, deliver them pristine and polished on a plate."



Jonathan Isaby is interviewed on Radio 5 Live about much needed changes to trade union laws



Dia Chakravarty takes our message to viewers of BBC Two's *Newsnight*



Jonathan Isaby takes on TUC General Secretary Frances O'Grady over public spending live on BBC Two's *Daily Politics*





## Point 5. Rally taxpayers to support our plan

# Engaging online and at a grassroots level

We use the traditional media to communicate to millions in one fell swoop, but for a campaign like ours, the ability to engage directly with the public through new and social media is increasingly important.

By harnessing the opportunities provided by modern technology, we can bypass the editorial middleman and speak directly to our supporters and the wider public about the issues that matter to them and promote our plan to cut public spending.

Our state-of-the-art website allows our tens of thousands of supporters to keep in touch with all of our campaigns on a daily basis, participate in polls and even organise events in their own area (more of which below).

The TPA's presence on social media is stronger than ever, not least due to the considerable efforts of our Digital Campaign Manager, Jordan Taylor. The number of followers we have on Twitter (@the\_tpa) recently passed the 10,000 mark and continues to grow by the week. A picture paints a thousand words, they say, and posting a hard-hitting graphic which our followers can retweet to their friends and followers means that we can in turn get our message out to hundreds of thousands of people on their computer or smartphone.

Likewise on Facebook, a punchy image which gets shared with friends can massively increase our reach. And the TPA's YouTube channel allows us not only to broadcast directly to the public, but also to host clips of our appearances in the mainstream media which you may have missed.



In our weekly *TPA Update* videos, Policy Analysts Jennifer Salisbury Jones and Harry Fairhead discuss their latest research developments



Following the release of *The Spending Plan*, Jonathan Isaby featured in a series of videos explaining its concepts, ideas and forecasts for the TaxPayers' Alliance YouTube channel



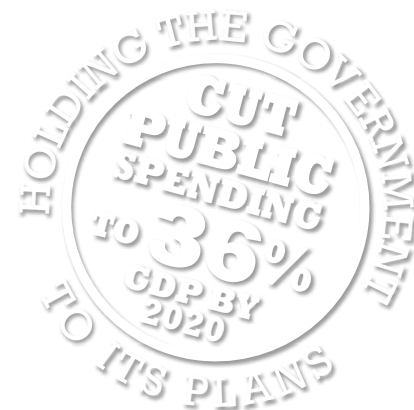
As we continue to make the case for reducing public spending, we want to be able to demonstrate how poor value is often found in existing spending programmes. With that in mind, we are in the final stages of developing an app for smartphones and tablets which will provide people with detailed data about their own local council's spending at their fingertips. Keep an eye out for its launch!

But while modern technology provides new opportunities for communicating with the public, we still value traditional interaction with individuals at a grassroots level. Our network of supporters around the country makes us unique among the campaign groups with a base in Westminster, ever ready to jump into action when a local council fritters away their hard-earned cash on some frivolous scheme or attempts to hike their Council Tax.

Our recently-revamped website makes it easier than ever for supporters to independently co-ordinate action and we hold regular Action Days in high streets and market squares around Britain, highlighting wasteful spending which needs to be reined in.

Our spokesmen also take our message directly to the public by speaking at business clubs and community groups, while we reach out to the next generation of taxpayers with regular talks at schools and universities. After all, it is that generation – Generation Screwed as we call them – who will, literally, be paying the price for decades to come for the irresponsible spending decisions of today's generation of politicians.

We will take any opportunity that arises to explain our plan for getting the nation living within its means once again, so if you would like a TPA speaker to address a club or other group with which you are involved, please get in touch.



## GET INVOLVED!

If you want to get more involved in your area as a TPA supporter, contact us at [grassroots@taxpayersalliance.com](mailto:grassroots@taxpayersalliance.com)



Our Wales Co-ordinator, Lee Canning, speaks to local residents in Wrexham on our Wales tour earlier this year



East Kent Co-ordinator, Ian Taylor, with our War on Waste tour campaign team



Dia Chakravarty out and about in Maidstone telling residents about a local £4 million street light switch-off scheme that won't save any money



Harry Fairhead signs up Southend-on-Sea residents to our weekly email bulletin



Members of our Action Team out in Tower Hamlets on a particularly rainy Saturday



A local businessman in London joins in the day's campaigning efforts



## Our case

# Living within our means is the right thing to do

Our plan is based on the simple premise that politicians should only spend what the country can afford. This means balancing the nation's books and – as George Osborne has previously said – “fixing the roof while the sun is shining”. Ensuring the country lives within its means once again, and that the proportion of GDP spent by the public sector is reduced over time, is the right thing to do for a number of different reasons.



Jonathan Isaby and Chief Operating Officer John O'Connell explain the TPA's message about living within our means to an American audience at the Atlas Network in Washington, D.C.

## The moral case

At the most basic level, spending beyond your means will require the accumulation of debt. This is true whether we're talking about an individual or a government: if you want to spend more than your income, you need to get out the credit card.

And if you don't pay off your credit card immediately, you're going to have to make regular interest payments on that debt. And if you keep accruing new debts faster than you can pay off the existing ones, the total you owe is going to increase month after month and the debt interest payments will therefore increase as well.

For an individual, that means having less and less money to spend on the essentials as the debt and the interest payments both mount.

For a government, it means the same thing: the total spent on servicing the burgeoning debt grows, leaving less to pay for essential services. And that's the situation in which we find ourselves right now. Because year after year, governments have been spending more than they have raised in revenue. The total national debt has hit £1.5 trillion and in 2014-15 the interest on that debt amounted to £33 billion – more than the combined tax revenues of all alcohol and tobacco duties.

## How would it look if a typical UK earner spent money like the Government?

Sources: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2014 Provisional results; Summer Budget 2015; TPA Analysis. Borrowing figures may not sum due to the way PSNB is calculated. Calculation is for 2014-15

The average UK earner's income is **£26,936**

If they spent money like the UK Government, they would spend **£30,649...**

...which means they'll have to borrow **£3,717 each year...**

...despite already being **£61,923 in debt.**







In April 2015, young TPA supporters – members of what we call Generation Screwed – gathered outside the Bank of England to highlight the alarming level of the national debt, run up by today's and yesterday's politicians, but which they will be paying off for years to come.

This eye-watering level of borrowing is totally irresponsible because it is merely taxation being deferred for another day – or more realistically another generation. In other words, the irresponsible spending choices of today's politicians will be paid for – quite literally – by the next generation of taxpayers.

*This is not fair or moral.*

What's more, reducing the overall proportion of money being spent by the public sector, as our plan envisages, will increase the proportion which individuals are able to choose how they spend on themselves, their own families and their own causes.

This is surely a more moral outcome than having a small number of politicians controlling a greater share of the spending of other people's money.

## The economic case

Both academic studies and empirical evidence have demonstrated time and again that reducing the size of the public sector, reducing the size of the national debt and increasing the size of the market share of the economy boosts prosperity. All of this is fully analysed in *The Spending Plan*.

In considering the economic case for our plan, we need in particular to bear in mind the following:

- The government is a poor supplier of goods and services compared to the private sector, so the less that can be supplied by government, the better overall value that will be achieved for each pound spent.
- An increase in the ratio of public spending to national income crowds out private-sector capital formation almost on a one-for-one basis, which is why economies with proportionately higher public spending find it harder to compete and to offer well-paid jobs. This is borne out through the data published for the twelve UK regions over a number of years: the underperformance of certain areas, despite decades of massive transfers from outside, suggests that a high level of government spending may itself be responsible for the problems of the poorer regions. Big subsidies and welfare handouts can be harmful because they

encourage people to look towards political activism and state dependency, rather than their own efforts in the marketplace.

- Numerous studies have shown that an extra 1 percentage point increase in the share of government consumption in GDP appears to be associated with a fall of somewhere between 0.1 percentage points and 0.4 percentage points in the growth rate of real GDP per head.

## The political case

It is certainly not for us to be concerned about the electoral prospects of any given politician or party. However, all of those in office or seeking office would do well to cast their eye over the history books when it comes to seeing how people have judged candidates and parties who have been deemed to be fiscally responsible and sought to restrain the size of the public sector.

*The Spending Plan* cites evidence from a number of British general elections during the course of the 20th century, as well as recent international examples, including Sweden and Switzerland, as to the political case for following our plan.

Promoting policies that increase economic growth and leave more money in people's pockets are electorally attractive: who'd have thought it?



Jonathan Isaby and John O'Connell on their way to brief policy unit staff at 10 Downing Street

Lower  
taxes

# Our plan will help you keep more of your own money

The charts on the page opposite are a salutary reminder of how much the Government is taking from us in tax each year and where it all goes – not forgetting the tens of billions of pounds which are still being borrowed to make up the shortfall.

If the Government were to eradicate the waste and review where it should and shouldn't be spending taxpayers' money in line with our plan, it would not need to take so much money from us in tax in the first place.

That is in line with our fundamental view that taxpayers should be free to keep as much of their own money as is reasonably possible to spend as they see fit. While there are of course certain things that make sense to be paid for through general taxation – such as national defences, a police force and the apparatus of a legal and justice system – we believe that far better value is generally achieved when people spend their own money on themselves rather than when a bureaucrat spends someone else's money (our taxes) on someone else.

The second of the two programmes of our *Spending Plan* (as described on page 4) was designed to bring public spending down to 31.7 per cent of GDP for a very specific reason: because that is the proportion of national income tax we calculated would be taken in tax if the Government adopted the extensive reforms and simplifications to the tax system proposed by the 2020 Tax Commission.

## *The Single Income Tax*

The 2020 Tax Commission was a joint project of the TaxPayers' Alliance and the Institute of Directors, chaired by Allister Heath, then Editor of *City A.M.* and now Deputy Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*. Its final report, *The Single Income Tax*, was published in 2012 and set out the most detailed contemporary plan yet for wholesale reform of the tax system.

It recommended that each stream of income should only be taxed once and that in order to create the conditions for stronger economic growth and higher employment (while treating taxpayers fairly), the Government needed to make taxes lower, simpler and more transparent. It proposed six steps:

1. **Taxes should be cut to 33 per cent of national income** (changes in accounting practices mean that this is now equivalent to the 31.7 per cent of GDP on which the second programme of *The Spending Plan* was based)
2. **Marginal tax rates should not exceed 30 per cent, and the personal allowance should rise to £10,000**
3. **Taxes on capital and labour income disguised as business taxes should be abolished, and replaced with a tax on distributed income**
4. **Transaction, wealth and inheritance taxes should be abolished**
5. **Other consumption taxes need to stay for now, but transport taxes should be cut**
6. **Local authorities should raise half of their spending power from local taxes**

These proposals would result in substantial tax cuts for households across the income distribution. At the time of publication, we calculated that a two-earner household, with an income of around £28,000, would receive a tax cut of around £3,400, providing a significant boost to economic growth.

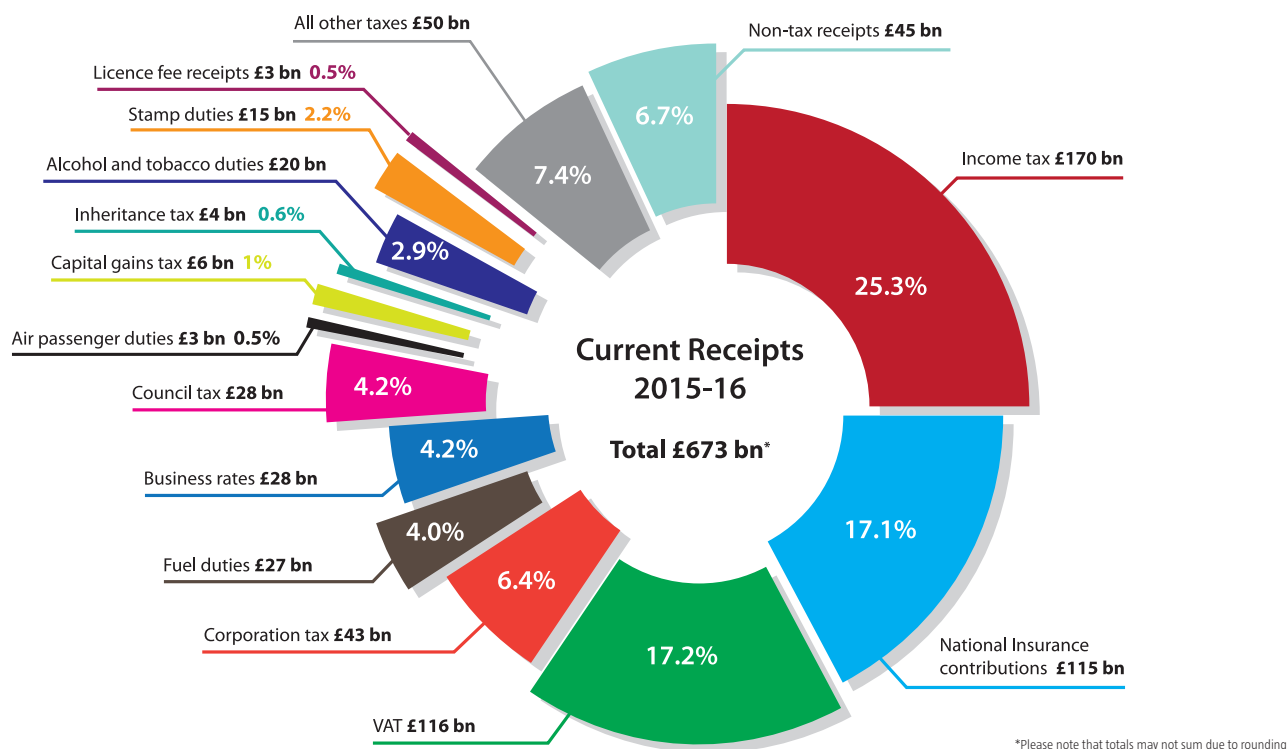


*The Single Income Tax* was the award-winning final report of the 2020 Tax Commission

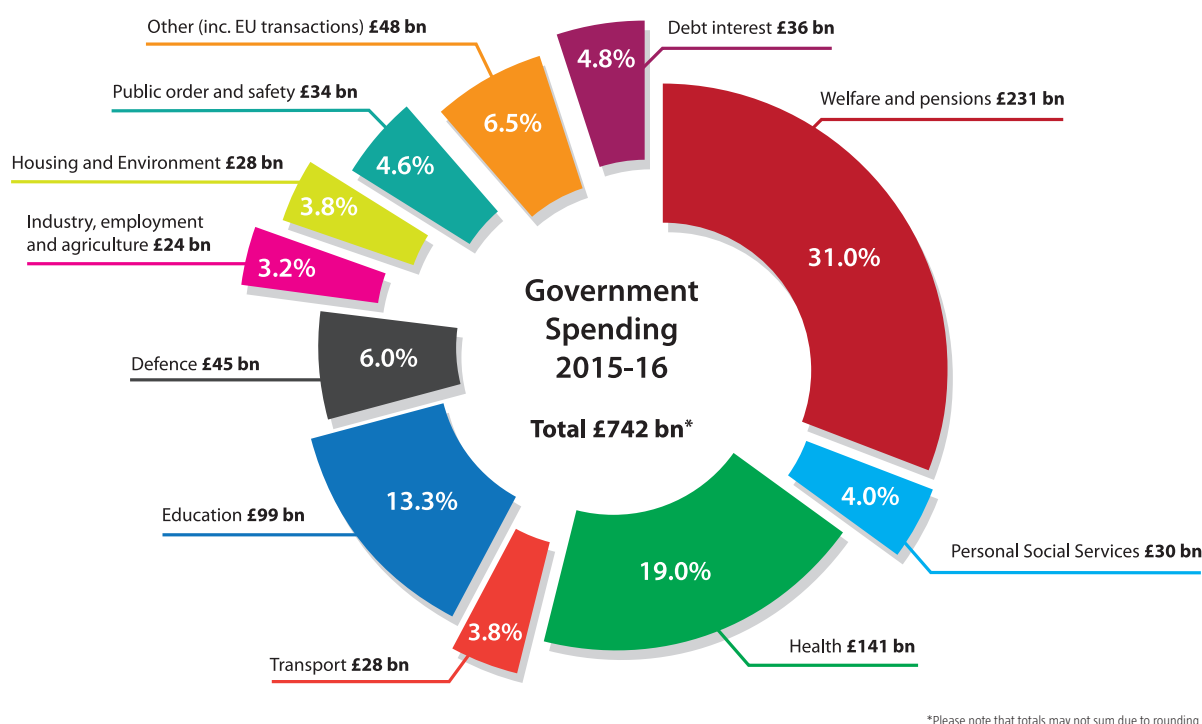
Our work received international acclaim in November 2013 when *The Single Income Tax* won the prestigious Templeton Freedom Award in New York from the Atlas Network, an organisation connecting 400 free-market groups from 80 countries across the globe. The judges praised our “ambitious and comprehensive reform plan”.

So not only do we have our plan for lower, less wasteful public spending, but we also have a plan for lower, simpler taxes, making the TaxPayers’ Alliance the only organisation to have presented a comprehensive, joined-up fiscal policy.

## What the Government takes from us each year



## And where all that money goes...





# Our team

## The team to implement our plan

The members of our team constitute a lean campaigning machine dedicated to making sure that the voice of the taxpayer is heard and our influence felt far and wide.

With backgrounds in campaigning, journalism, business, economics, politics and much more besides, we believe that we are uniquely placed to represent your interests and promote our plan.

The staff in our office make up a cohesive team, working broadly across three different strands. The Operations and Development

team ensure our events and activities run smoothly, keep us in touch with supporters and fundraise to keep the show on the road. It is our Research team who prepare, conduct and write up our research, as well as liaising with external authors and additional outside experts. And our Campaign team concentrate on promoting all of our work to the media, parliamentarians and the public.

Our regional co-ordinators and volunteers across the country take our message direct to the grassroots in their areas; we are grateful to be able to draw on the wealth of experience and expertise of our Research Fellows; and of course our Founder and Chairman, without whom the TPA would never have been conceived, remain a constant source of advice and inspiration.

Additionally, we are delighted to have a regular flow of student volunteers spending a few weeks or months at a time in the office, assisting the permanent team with all that we do. In fact, no fewer than five of our staff started their TPA career in this way!



**Matthew Elliott (Founder)**

@matthew\_elliott

Matthew founded the TaxPayers' Alliance and has proven himself to be one of the foremost political campaigners and strategists working in Westminster. Having also founded the successful civil liberties campaign, Big Brother Watch, he led the triumphant "No" campaign in the 2011 referendum on electoral reform and is now Chief Executive of Business for Britain, campaigning for a better deal for the UK out of the European Union. His expertise has been sought by a variety of campaigning organisations on virtually every continent and he also has a number of books to his name. As chairman of Westminster's monthly "Tuesday Meeting" he is also well known for his ability to build successful coalitions and bring like-minded campaigners together. Matthew continues to provide strategic direction and guidance to the TaxPayers' Alliance to this day.



**Jonathan Isaby (Chief Executive)**

@isaby

Jonathan joined the TaxPayers' Alliance as Political Director in 2011 after more than a decade as a journalist in Westminster. He worked variously as a political analyst in the BBC's Westminster newsroom, a reporter for the *Daily Telegraph* and as Co-editor of ConservativeHome.com, as well as writing a column for *GQ* and co-authoring the only book to be written about the momentous 2008 London Mayoral election which saw Boris Johnson defeat Ken Livingstone. He has used his journalistic and political experience and contacts to good effect at the TPA, helping to boost our profile both in the media and in Parliament. Since being appointed Chief Executive in 2014 he has spent an increasing amount of time meeting supporters and speaking at events in every corner of the country, but is still regularly to be seen and heard holding politicians to account on TV and radio.



**Andrew Allum (Chairman)**

Andrew is the non-executive and unpaid Chairman of the TaxPayers' Alliance, providing insight and guidance since our founding in 2004. He is currently a Partner at a leading strategy consulting firm and has a variety of other business interests. A former Westminster City Councillor, he takes a particular interest in education and transport policy and ensuring that the TPA itself delivers value for money.



**John O'Connell (Chief Operating Officer)**

@jjpoconnell

John is the longest-serving member of the TPA's permanent staff, having joined the team in 2009. Rising through the ranks as a researcher, then Research Director, Director and now Chief Operating Officer, he has an unrivalled understanding of how the organisation functions at all levels. He has written numerous research papers which have informed government policy and oversaw the work of the 2020 Tax Commission. John is responsible for co-ordinating and managing the various strands of our work and ensuring that the team are focused on delivering what is expected of them.

**Emma Bennett (Development Director)**

Emma joined the TaxPayers' Alliance in 2009 after working in both the House of Commons and the European Parliament. She has helped ensure the smooth running of countless events over the years and is now responsible for overseeing the organisation, finances and fundraising of the TPA on a daily basis.

**Katherine Gray (Operations Manager)**

@\_katherinegray

Katherine joined the TaxPayers' Alliance in 2014 with a background in Parliament, political campaigns, polling and market research. While retaining a strong interest in energy policy and consumer issues, she is now responsible for the day-to-day running of our Westminster office and our events schedule.

**Milly Skriczka (Development Manager)**

Milly is the newest addition to the team, bringing with her a wealth of public and private sector experience. A one-time hotel owner/manager who has most recently been working in Parliament, she works on fundraising and helps to ensure our supporters are kept in touch with all that we are doing.

**Alex Wild (Research Director)**

Alex has a background in economic research and political campaigning and since joining the TPA in 2012 has worked on numerous reports and helped to prepare evidence we have submitted to House of Commons Select Committees. He has a particular interest in healthcare and frequently appears on local and national media promoting our research.

**Jennifer Salisbury Jones (Policy Analyst)**

@JSalisburyJones

Jennifer has been part of the TPA team since 2013, having been heavily involved in the student libertarian movement through the Bristol Freedom Society and the Liberty League. As part of our research team, she takes a particular interest in local government policy and making public spending data as accessible as possible.

**Harry Fairhead (Policy Analyst)**

@HFairhead

Harry joined the TaxPayers' Alliance research team in 2014 and has worked on a number of papers scrutinising, amongst other things, public sector pay and waste in government departments. He is particularly interested in the effects of taxation on income and incentives and has written both blogs and research papers on the subject.

**Dia Chakravarty (Political Director)**

@DiaChakravarty

Dia brought experience from the City and public affairs when she joined us in 2014 to oversee our engagement with parliamentarians. You will also see and hear her representing the TaxPayers' Alliance in the media, having made high-profile appearances on flagship programmes including *Question Time* and *Any Questions*.

**Jordan Taylor (Campaign Manager)**

@jordan\_devi

Jordan joined the TPA as a Policy Analyst in 2014 before moving to the campaign team where she is responsible for our online and social media presence. She also builds web applications while maintaining an interest in the progress of Government IT projects and the economic and political consequences of ageing populations.

**Lee Canning (Wales Co-ordinator)**

@Lee\_Canning

Lee oversees and organises grassroots TaxPayers' Alliance activity in Wales, where he has been involved with us since 2010. A small businessman by day, he campaigns in particular against excessive and wasteful spending by local authorities and the Welsh Government.

**David Hoey (Northern Ireland Co-ordinator)**

David oversees our efforts in Northern Ireland. He runs his own business but has a long-standing interest in politics and a deep understanding of the political situation in Northern Ireland. He is especially keen to expose public sector waste and hold politicians to account for their decisions.

**RESEARCH FELLOWS**

**Simon Cook:** Simon has experience both in the City and in local government and his research focus for the TPA is on education policy and the role of local government.

**Mike Denham:** Mike has worked in both the private and public sectors, including a stint as a Treasury economist, and has written extensively on government waste, not least being author of both the blog and book entitled *Burning Our Money*.

**Dominique Lazanski:** Dominique was the TPA's head of digital policy between 2010 and 2013, during which time she was appointed to the Government's Open Data User Group. Her key areas of interest are open data and internet governance.

**Rory Meakin:** Rory held various roles at the TPA between 2010 and 2015, including Lead Researcher to the 2020 Tax Commission and Editor of *The Spending Plan*. He specialises in tax policy and has written widely on tax simplification and reform.

**Lee Rotherham:** Lee has advised many parliamentarians and worked on a number of political campaigns, with a particular focus on the workings of the European Union. He was co-author of an earlier edition of our *Bumper Book of Government Waste*.

**Mark Wallace:** Mark is a writer, blogger and political campaigner who appears regularly in the media as a political commentator, having been our Campaign Director between 2007 and 2010.

## Policy victories

# Our track record shows that we can deliver

The TaxPayers' Alliance was only founded in 2004, yet in our relatively short existence, we have already achieved a great deal.

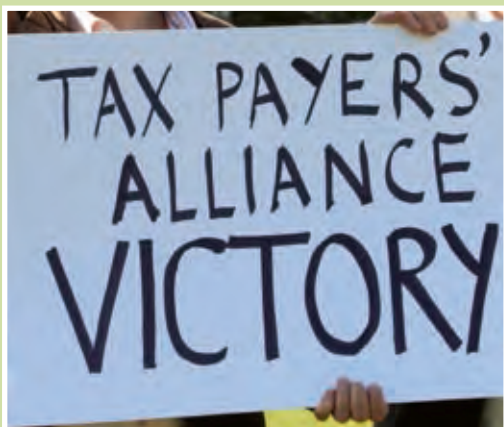
Over the last decade or so, the TPA has seriously established itself as a voice for taxpayers both in the media and in the corridors of power, with a campaign reaching across the nation.

Until our founding, there really wasn't anyone out there to stand up for hard-pressed families and businesses, challenging all those politicians and bureaucrats who take our money in tax but then waste far too much of it. Who was asking the difficult questions of elected officials about where our money has gone? And who was there to demand more openness about how that money is spent and to seek a better deal for all of us?

And that's where we can demonstrate that we have made a real difference. Not only is the TPA a vocal critic when money is being wasted or taxes are being unfairly hiked, but – crucially – we are also effective campaigners for change.

Our rigorous research and eye-catching campaigns ensure that the voice of the taxpayer no longer goes unheard. So when waste needs to be eradicated or a policy needs to change, you can be sure that we'll be out there making the case and pressing decision-makers to do the right thing by taxpayers.

Here's just a small selection of the victories we have secured in recent years.



## Spending Transparency

We have always strongly believed that wherever taxpayers' money is being spent, we – as the taxpayers who provided it – have a right to know how much is being spent and on what.

When it came to exposing waste and misspending in the early days of the TPA, the only way to discover how many town hall bureaucrats were on six-figure salaries for our *Town Hall Rich List* series, for example, was to make Freedom of Information requests to every single council in the land. We felt that this information ought to be in the public domain anyway and as a result of our campaigning, councils are now obliged to publish it automatically rather than have it forced out of them.

But those salaries are just a small part of how the public sector spends money. We pushed for more openness about how taxpayers' money is spent across the board and again our campaigning paid off. Within a month of becoming Prime Minister in 2010, David Cameron announced a swathe of measures to open up spending data with the automatic publication of central government spending over £25,000 and all local government spending over £500.

This represented a huge victory for the TPA and our dogged persistence that this information should be available so that taxpayers can hold politicians to account. And quite apart from allowing wasteful spending to be exposed, the mere fact that the spending data is getting published focuses the minds of politicians and bureaucrats, thereby preventing the most egregious examples of waste from ever getting the green light.



Having forced the government to open up spending data, our team can now analyse that information when it is published online



## Public Sector Pay Restraint

Another long-standing area of concern for us is the way in which public sector workers enjoy pay, perks and pensions worth a considerable amount more than their direct counterparts in the private sector. In the late 2000s we felt that action was required in order to narrow this widening gap and we were the first group to call for a public sector pay freeze back in September 2009, which was enacted by the Coalition Government on taking office in the spring of 2010. Given how large a proportion of public spending is covered by the public sector pay bill, the need for restraint has continued, so we welcomed the four-year 1 per cent cap on public sector pay rises announced by George Osborne at the 2015 Summer Budget.

Again, we can also claim to have set the agenda on reining in excessive pay deals for the highest paid bureaucrats in Whitehall and local government. Within two days of the publication of our 2009 *Public Sector Rich List*, identifying 120 people earning more than £250,000, the then Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, demanded that “this culture of excess must change” and announced that any new public sector contract with a salary above £150,000 would have to be approved by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury. Such a rule exists to this day thanks to the pressure we have exerted on the issue.

## Reducing the Benefit Cap

Analysis of the Coalition Government’s £26,000 benefit cap showed that it led to increased employment levels in affected households. We therefore argued in *The Spending Plan* that to continue this progress the Government should go further and reduce the benefit cap to £20,000. Such a limit is still significantly above the national minimum wage (which is around £13,000 for an adult over 21 working full-time) but is decidedly closer to national average post-tax pay, whereas the £26,000 cap was equivalent to a pre-tax income of around £35,000. A £20,000 benefit cap is exactly what George Osborne announced at the 2015 Summer Budget (with the proviso that the cap would be £23,000 in London). This was the first solid policy change we recommended in *The Spending Plan* to be implemented.

## Cutting Corporation Tax

One of the popular allures of Corporation Tax is that it is seen to shift the tax burden from ordinary people onto businesses. From an economic perspective, however, this is impossible because tax can only be paid by people, be they investors (through lower returns on investment), customers (through higher prices) or employees (through lower wages). This is why we have always campaigned for reductions in Corporation Tax and are delighted that the main rate has been reduced by successive Chancellors during our short lifetime from 30 per cent to 20 per cent currently – and are looking forward to the further reduction, to 18 per cent, set to occur in 2020-21.

## Freezing Fuel Tax

For millions of people, a car is not a luxury but a necessity or a lifeline which is essential for getting to work, taking the children to school or doing the weekly shop. Taxation on petrol is already punitive and a massive addition to the cost of living, now accounting for over 60 per cent of the cost of filling your tank – making it the highest tax rate on petrol of any European country.

Our Freeze Fuel Tax campaign, launched in 2012, demanded that the Chancellor scrap plans to raise Fuel Duty further and at least freeze the rate. We placed displays at petrol stations around the country setting out the potential cost of further tax rises and encouraged supporters to exert pressure on the politicians to stop the tax rises. The tax has been frozen ever since.



As Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Sir Eric Pickles MP – pictured here with our Founder, Matthew Elliott – implemented several key TPA proposals

## Local Government victories

### No more pensions for councillors

In 2012 we revealed for the first time how many thousands of councillors had joined the Local Government Pension Scheme meant for local council employees: even the Department for Communities and Local Government referred to our research as the authoritative source. As a result of our campaigning, councillors have now been banned from joining the scheme.

### The right to report council meetings

In 2013 we exposed examples of councils throwing people out of the public gallery for having the temerity to use social media to tell friends and neighbours what their elected representatives were doing at council meetings. Democracy should never live behind closed doors and we demanded a change in the law. Communities and Local Government Secretary, Eric Pickles, listened and inserted a section into the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 enshrining the public’s right to record and blog council meetings as a direct result of our campaigning.

Support  
us



Andrew Allum, Chairman

## How your donation can help us make an impact

£10,000	Supports a major research project investigating government waste
£5,000	Sponsors our student volunteer programme
£2,500	Helps us produce a hard-hitting online video to promote our plan
£1,000	Covers the cost of a regional War on Waste tour
£500	Funds a briefing event for opinion formers, journalists and politicians
£250	Allows us to distribute a major report to 100 MPs
£100	Provides leaflets for a local Action Day

# We need your help to implement our plan

You've now read our plan to get Britain living within its means once again and our explanation as to why the nation's books must be balanced. I hope you agree that it's the right thing to do.

You've also met our award-winning team who will implement that plan, having already helped deliver savings for taxpayers now worth tens of billions of pounds every single year.

But we can only implement our plan if we have the necessary budget to put it into practice.

We rely on thousands of people like you who donate their own hard-earned cash each year to support our work and keep the show on the road. Without those selfless contributions, we simply wouldn't be able to do what we do: exposing public sector waste and making the case for lower, simpler taxes and lower public spending.

Since we demand value for money from all those politicians and bureaucrats who spend our money, it is only right that we make the same guarantee to all those who have dipped into their own wallets to support us.

First of all, we have no debts: we never have done and never will. We live within our means and only spend what we raise – as we strain every sinew to make the Government adhere to the same fiscal discipline.

Secondly, we work hard to make every pound we raise go as far as possible. As Chairman, I have never taken a penny in remuneration, but we have a keen, young staff who work extremely long hours. And they all go the extra mile when needed, whether it be researchers working into the night to turn around policy analysis or members of the campaign team getting up at the crack of dawn to make an early morning radio appearance or coming into London during their weekend to do a TV interview.

The TaxPayers' Alliance has never received – and would never accept – a penny in taxpayers' money through government or EU grants, which certainly cannot be said for all campaign groups.

We are funded entirely through the generosity of concerned citizens like you.

So if you do agree with us and want to help ensure the voice of taxpayers is heard loud and clear, please see below for details of how you can help.

Thanks for reading,

Andrew Allum

## Ways to give to the TaxPayers' Alliance

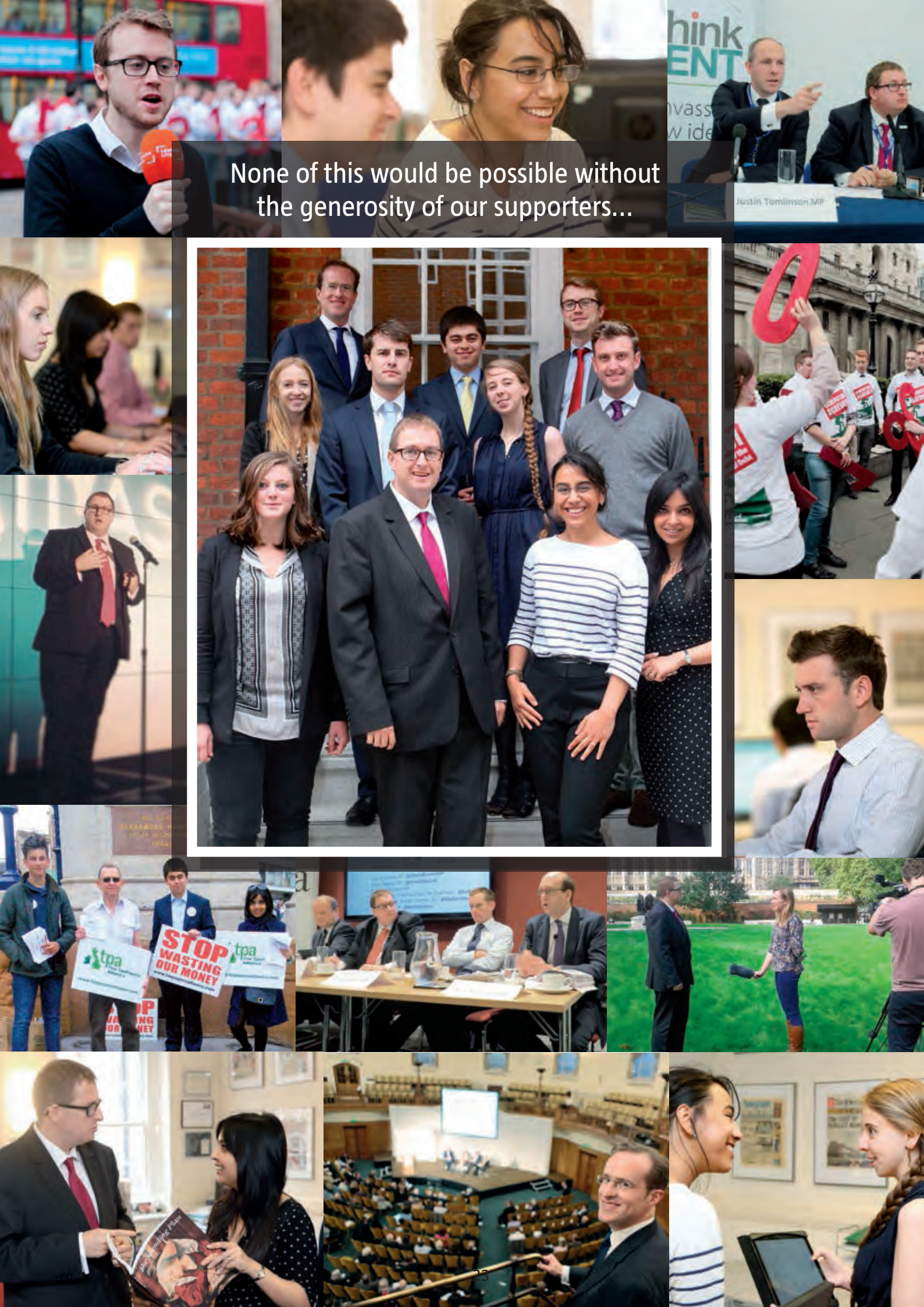
There are several ways in which you can make a donation to the TaxPayers' Alliance:

- Send a cheque made payable to "The TaxPayers' Alliance" to 55 Tufton Street, London, SW1P 3QL
- Call us on 020 7340 6020 to make a debit or credit card payment
- Set up a Standing Order to make a regular donation. Please send an email to our Development Manager, Milly Skriczka, who is available at [milly.skriczka@taxpayersalliance.com](mailto:milly.skriczka@taxpayersalliance.com)
- Via our website at [www.taxpayersalliance.com/donate](http://www.taxpayersalliance.com/donate)

Whatever you can afford, it will help us make a real difference – thank you!

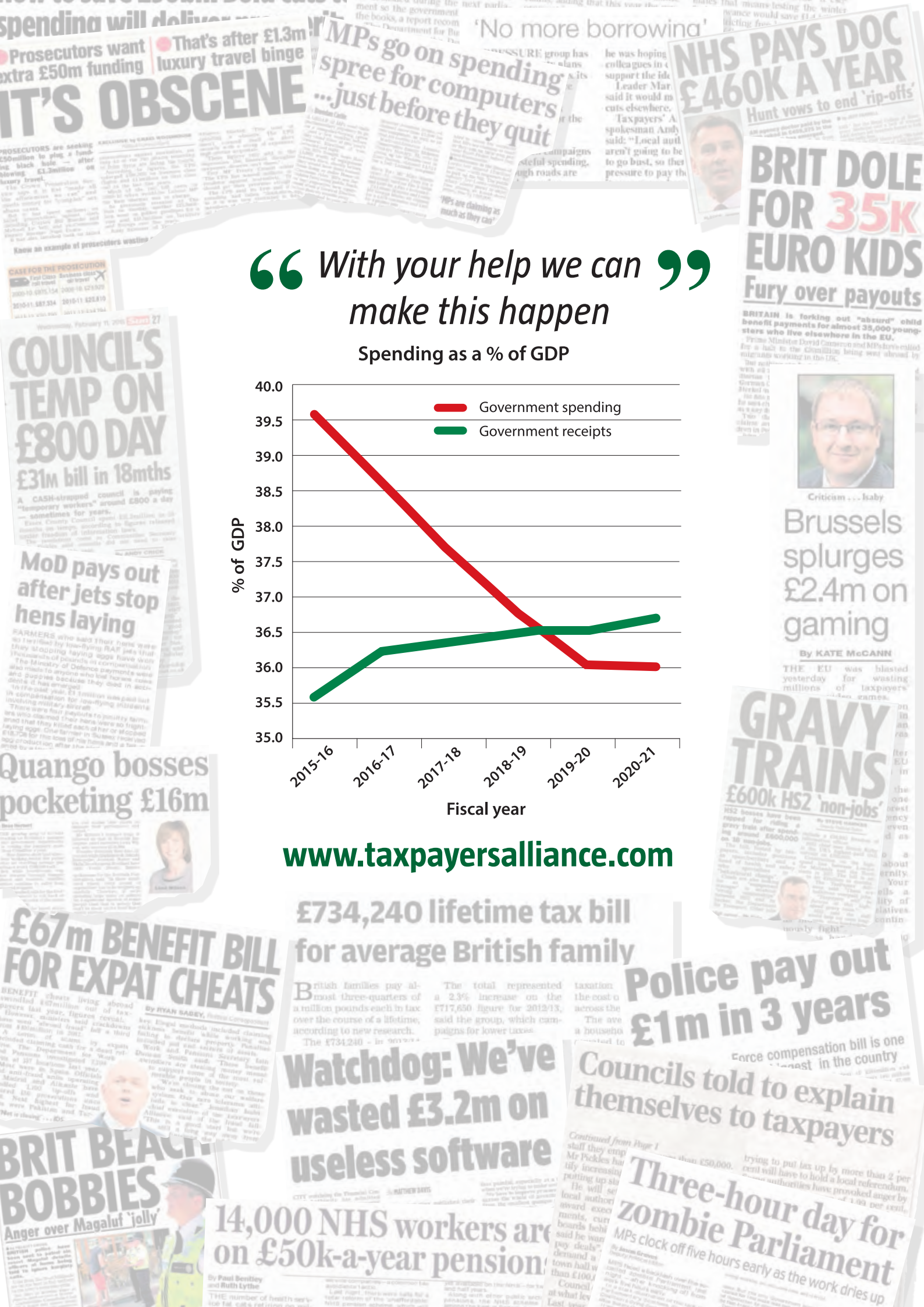
**DONATE**





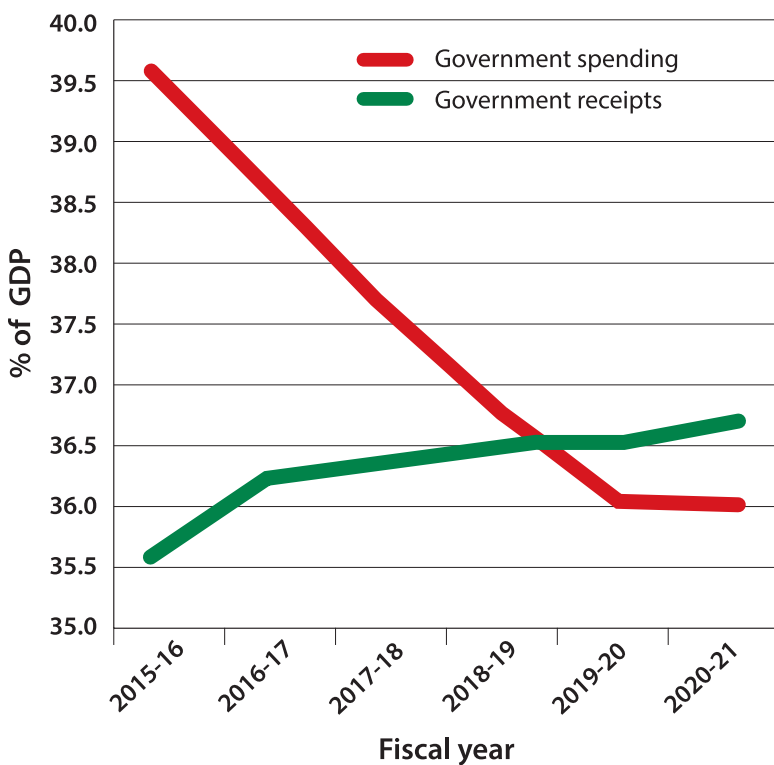
None of this would be possible without the generosity of our supporters...





“ With your help we can make this happen ”

Spending as a % of GDP



[www.taxpayersalliance.com](http://www.taxpayersalliance.com)

## £734,240 lifetime tax bill for average British family

British families pay almost three-quarters of a million pounds each in tax over the course of a lifetime, according to new research.

The £734,240 - in 2013-14

The total represented a 2.3% increase on the £717,650 figure for 2012/13, said the group, which campaigns for lower taxes.

## Police pay out £1m in 3 years

Force compensation bill is one of highest in the country

## Watchdog: We've wasted £3.2m on useless software

CITF watchdog the Financial Com

## Three-hour day for zombie Parliament

MPs clock off five hours early as the work dries up

## 14,000 NHS workers are on £50k-a-year pension

By Paul Bentley and Ruth Lythe

## £67m BENEFIT BILL FOR EXPAT CHEATS

BENEFIT cheats living abroad pocketed £67million out of tax-payers' purses last year, figures reveal.

## BRIT BEACH BOBBIES

Anger over Magaluf 'jolly'