



PRESS RELEASE
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We must come to rescue of the middle classes, Owen Paterson will say at launch of 'UK 2020'

- **Owen Paterson will launch UK 2020 tonight (Tuesday 4th) at RICS, Parliament Square, London. 7pm. All media invited. Full text of speech attached (embargoed for 7pm tonight).**
- **Conservative Party must lift 40p threshold further and faster to ease tax burden on millions of middle class workers**
- **Stamp duty, capital gains and inheritance taxes should be slashed**
- **Government departments should be scrapped to reign in excessive public spending**

Former Environment Secretary, Owen Paterson, will make a major speech on the economy tonight (Tuesday 4th) as he launches his new think-tank, UK 2020.

Mr Paterson will be using his newfound freedom, following 14 years on the Conservative frontbench, to establish where the UK would be by 2020 if it adopted robust, outward looking, common sense policies.

Launching the new think tank tonight in Westminster, Owen Paterson will say:

“It is high time we rediscovered the virtues of low taxation. Low taxes encourage effort, initiative and enterprise. They reward society’s wealth creators and risk takers, the people who create jobs and build the prosperity that benefits us all.”

“We should start with a significant uplift in the threshold for paying 40 per cent income tax to send a signal that those who work hard and achieve success will be rewarded, not penalised.”

The 40 per cent tax threshold must be lifted further and faster. In the late 1980s it only applied to 1 in 20; it now applies to nearly 1 in 6. The rate would now stand at £75,000 if it has risen in line with wages.

Stamp Duty should be slashed. It used to be levied at one per cent and only on the most expensive properties. But now by 2018 four fifths of homes will be hit by it at one level or another.

Some Whitehall departments should be scrapped. Can the UK afford so many independent departments, including BIS, DECC, DCMS and DfID, with all the associated costs?

Government spending must be reined in. We’re still borrowing over £100 billion more than we’re raising through taxation. It is both irresponsible and immoral. The UK has never raised more than 39 per cent of GDP in taxes.

Mr. Paterson will continue: *“I am convinced that the majority of people in the country are small---c conservatives at heart, looking for optimistic, common sense policies that deliver results.*

“So if we can communicate some simple truths to the public – about the importance of balancing the books, about the duty on ministers to spend public money wisely and frugally, and about the dynamic effects of low taxation, this puts the country’s best interests at the forefront. If we do all that and forget the focus groups, we will take the public with us.”

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For media enquiries, please contact Jago Pearson of Media Intelligence Partners on 07796 754 376.

Owen Paterson will launch UK 2020 tonight at the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, Parliament Square, London SW1. 7pm. All media invited.