

# Unlock the Vote: A manifesto for change

We believe that all people in prison in the UK - except in the most exceptional circumstances - should have the right to vote. A prison sentence or a criminal record can't bar a person from participating in our democracy.

Our political system has never been static. It was built through struggle and reform that was driven by people like you and me. People who cared. People who often paid a heavy price for their beliefs – including imprisonment.

The right to vote was hard won. We believe it's time to extend that right further.

According to His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, prison has three aims: to protect the public, punish offenders and rehabilitate people to reduce crime. Nowhere is the denial of the vote listed among these purposes.

We believe that **citizenship education and democratic participation should be central to rehabilitation**. We believe the right to vote should stand at the heart of this approach.

This is a moment of change for both democratic participation and penal policy.

And we have a choice.

We can continue to exclude and silence...

...or we can extend the franchise, strengthen democracy and show that everyone has a stake in shaping the future.

We believe it's time to **unlock the vote**.