British Identity –
community cohesion and
embracing diversity

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REBRANDING AS
“COOL BRITANNIA”

- Forward looking and modern
- Young and creative
- Outward-looking to Europe and the world
- Diversity
- Human Rights and Equalities

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POLICIES REFLECTING REBRANDING

- Investment in education & training, science & innovation, to create high tech, globally competitive, economy
- Re-engagement with EU
- Ethical foreign policy, rejoin UNESCO & increased development aid
- Human Rights Act
- Equalities legislation (equal age of consent, outlawing religious and race discrimination, ethnic monitoring and indirect discrimination)
- Devolution – Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly, London Assembly

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CURRENT CONTEXT FOR DEBATE ON BRITISHNESS

- Multicultural, multi-ethnic, multi-faith, multi-national Britain

- Increased economic migration (particularly from EU8)

- Signs of social exclusion
  - 7/7 & 21/7 bombings, support for jihadist groups
  - inequalities; some linked to ethnicity
  - riots, gun & knife crime
  - competition for scarce social goods e.g. housing

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COMMISSION ON INTEGRATION & COHESION

- Imagine the open communities of 2020 .... Thriving and prosperous places where people from all different backgrounds are equal, and where everyone matters – whether old or young, settled or new, Black or White. There are local places where all groups feel that they are treated fairly, and that they have a responsibility to others that transcends the differences between them.

- Imagine places where people are confident about change and the benefits it brings, who are not threatened by others, and who are able to welcome newcomers and offer them the support they need. Where people recognise that while there will always be difference, it need not always be divisive.

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COMMISSION ON INTEGRATION & COHESION 2

- WHAT DID THEY FIND?
  - 80% agree that people of different backgrounds get on well in their local area
  - in a few areas cohesion rates much lower – associated with deprivation and perception of unfair allocation of public services
  - diversity linked to poor cohesion in some areas with rapid demographic change
    - urban areas in SE with internal UK migration
    - rural areas with migration from EU8
    - diverse inner city areas with migration from non-commonwealth countries

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- KEY PRINCIPLES
  - prioritising shared future over divided legacies
  - rights and responsibilities – citizenship and obligations
  - mutual respect and civility
  - visible social justice

LEADS TO VIEW OF BRITISHNESS AS
- A SENSE OF BELONGING:
- NATIONALLY AND ALSO LOCALLY
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- WHAT DID THEY RECOMMEND?
- prioritising shared future over divided legacies
  - encouraging interaction in schools, workplaces, shared public spaces & residential areas, sports and culture
  - Councils monitoring cohesion in their area, acting to pre-empt separation or conflict
  - Councils and public bodies favouring shared activities
- rights and responsibilities – citizenship and obligations
  - Ajegbo report on Citizenship
  - New organisation to improve integration of new migrants
  - English language requirement for citizens

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- WHAT DID THEY RECOMMEND?
- mutual respect and civility
  - school twinning
  - engagement with faith organisations, interfaith
  - myth busting by public authorities
- visible social justice
  - transparent council policies on housing allocations
  - investment in up-skilling existing workforce to reduce earnings gap
  - Commission on Equalities and Human Rights to have regional network to combat discrimination
Did you know that migrants benefit the health service in the following ways?

- Without doctors, nurses and other migrant staff the National Health Service would literally collapse.
- 38% of all doctors working in hospitals in England qualified outside of the UK.
- 40% of dentists are born abroad.
- 16% of nurses are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- 58% of new doctors in the NHS were born overseas.
- 25% of British medics have their roots in the Indian subcontinent. This gives rise to a third of trainee doctors.
- 44,000 overseas nurses worked in the NHS last year alone.
- In the Greater London Authority 23% of doctors and 47% of nurses working in the NHS are foreign born.

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