



# unchecked.uk

LET'S PROTECT WHAT MATTERS MOST

## 2023-25



*“...from the public’s viewpoint, a regulation is a protection against harm.”  
(George Lakoff)*

# Who we are

**Unchecked UK** is a non-partisan organisation set up to make the case for strong social and environmental protections, and for the public bodies which enforce them. To do this we work with our [supporters](#) and champions to shape and promote a positive narrative about regulation in the UK.

In our first three years we have focused on documenting the UK's widening '[enforcement gap](#)', demonstrating [public](#) and [business](#) support for strong social and environmental protections, and building a supporter network with a combined membership of over 5 million.

# Why we exist

Strong protections are more important than ever before. The combined effects of automation and major structural changes to the labour market are leaving workers more exposed. Likewise, it will be impossible to address the impending nature and climate crises without robust regulatory mechanisms aimed at shifting consumption patterns and business behaviours. Whether it's air pollution, rogue landlords, online safety, tax dodgers, unsafe food, or modern slavery, we all suffer the consequences of weak protections.

Despite this, the idea that 'regulations are burdens' is deeply entrenched in public discourse. Regulations are widely portrayed as an assault on fundamental British

values, a drag on growth and job creation, a threat to individual liberty, and an insult to 'common sense'. These narratives exert huge power – they have been established and reinforced over decades, have infiltrated everyday media and public discourse, and have become entrenched in the way that many conceive of regulations today.

We know that narrative shifts play a fundamental part in generating deep and lasting social change. Changing the story about an issue both increases the scope for challenging the status quo and for reform. Our aim in the next phase of Unchecked UK is therefore to **transform the narrative about regulations and to put protections at the heart of UK policy making.**



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# What we want to achieve

In the next three years we will focus on three objectives:

## Convene and galvanise protections champions:

The momentum behind campaigns to challenge deregulation is growing. [Civil society groups](#), trade unions, [environmental activists](#) and [business groups](#), as well as politicians from across the political spectrum, are voicing their mounting concerns about the weakening of the rules that protect us, and the hollowing out of the agencies that enforce these rules. **In our next phase of work we will help our allies align around and amplify an alternative vision to the one proposed by advocates of deregulation.** In addition to Unchecked UK's growing network of civil society supporters, we will build support from MPs and Peers from across the political spectrum and will launch a network of business champions.

## Articulate and embed a compelling pro-protection counter-narrative:

We will document the extent of the dominance of 'burden' narratives in public discourse and produce insights into why these narratives have proved so resilient and effective. The goal is to provide a tangible, visual representation of the challenge we currently face.

We will also **develop and test counter-narratives which can animate the core shared beliefs and values of the UK public.** We will craft compelling metaphors and storylines which embody the importance of protections in ways that we know can have cut-through across society.

## Work with our network of protection champions to amplify a pro-protection narrative:

We will work with protection champions to **promote a different narrative about regulation.** We will enable concerted actions via joint campaigns and media interventions, working closely with allies to ensure that we communicate a consistent pro-protection narrative.

**We will aim to secure commitments to a pro-protection platform across the political spectrum. In addition to leveraging evidence of public and business support for strong protections, we will generate policy ideas which exemplify this agenda.**

