

# Funding the Future

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If Reform hasn't got a policy for potholes, frankly, it hasn't got a policy for anything else either.

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This is the audio version:

[https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=7zgq6-17a7052-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=&logo\\_link=episode\\_page&btn-skin=c73a3a](https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=7zgq6-17a7052-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a)

This is the transcript:

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What would Reform do about potholes? Now, I know that sounds like a rather odd question, but potholes are at the absolute epicentre of UK politics, and for a very good reason.

Potholes happen in roads. Roads are the clearest indication of infrastructure provided for the common good, at present, without charge being made. Repairing them requires taxation because they are provided for the common good, and repairing them requires that there be people available to repair them with a structure of government in place that can ensure that priorities can be established and delivery can be achieved. This is all about the social contract as a consequence.

It's about the relationship between government and meeting the needs of people. And people need roads without potholes. Potholes are really dangerous, which is why they are such a political hot topic. They can literally kill cyclists. They damaged the underframes and tyres of Porsches. Everyone is affected. And if they get worse, they actually make the movement of people and goods around the UK very hard. So, we need a government in Westminster with representation through local authorities to ensure that funding can be supplied for local need to meet the need to fill potholes.

So, what will Reform do about this? Because, let's be honest, Reform doesn't recognise that there is a social contract between government and people. Its whole political ethos is based upon the idea that people get on with things for themselves.

It doesn't believe in government spending. It wants to cut it wherever it can. And we know from recent precedent from the last 14 or 15 years that governments who are looking for cuts, cut local authority spending first, and local authorities are responsible for most potholes.

We also know that the way in which Reform is organised is very poor. We know that because we've seen the way it manages its own internal party affairs. It has no ability to even work out who should be candidates for that party, let alone manage anything else. But the management of potholes is quite complicated. Because you've got to identify where they are, record where they are, assess the risk, decide to issue a contract, organise that contract, issue it, then make sure that the contractor has fulfilled their obligations, make settlement and everything else.

This is a major task undertaken by government for our benefit, at cost, which is very little appreciated because once the pothole is filled, it's gone away, as far as the public are aware. They're no longer concerned about it; it's a non-issue. And yet, although the public might take it for granted, the cost is real.

Now, can Reform get its head around issues which are actually as politically complicated as that, and manage the situation in a way that delivers benefit without praise being offered in return? I simply don't know. But because this is such a focal point of local concern in so many communities, Reform needs a pothole policy. And I don't even think it's capable of producing that.

After all, who is going to fill these potholes is a very good question. It's a simple, straightforward fact that we don't have enough skilled people in the UK to undertake all the building activities that we need to plan for now if we are to manage climate change, meet the need for housing and everything else. We've relied on migrants. What will happen if Reform denies us those migrants? Will potholes go unfilled?

What happens if this perpetuation of government by chaos, which would appear to be the Reform plan, becomes a part of our lives? Will we actually even be able to use our roads?

It is a very important question because at the core of that question is a question about the very competence of a party who wants to be in government and who simultaneously hates everything about what government is and everything about what it can supply. But when in reality, what government supplies is at the very core of the delivery of well-being to the people of the UK, I don't know how Nigel Farage would reconcile this.

I know that good government could reconcile this, and some finance is essential to that process. And I know how to deliver that finance too. And we could even induce people to undertake those activities, if only we put into place the right government policies. But at present, none of those things are remotely close to the Reform agenda, and therefore, I think they need to face some political reality, as does everybody who's thinking of voting for Reform. Because if Reform hasn't got a policy for potholes, frankly, it hasn't got a policy for anything else either.