

THE NEW DEAL

DEMOS

# RESILIENT INFORMATION ECOSYSTEMS

UPGRADING THE INFORMATION  
SUPPLY CHAIN FOR DEMOCRACY

HANNAH PERRY

JULY 2026



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Published by Demos July 2026  
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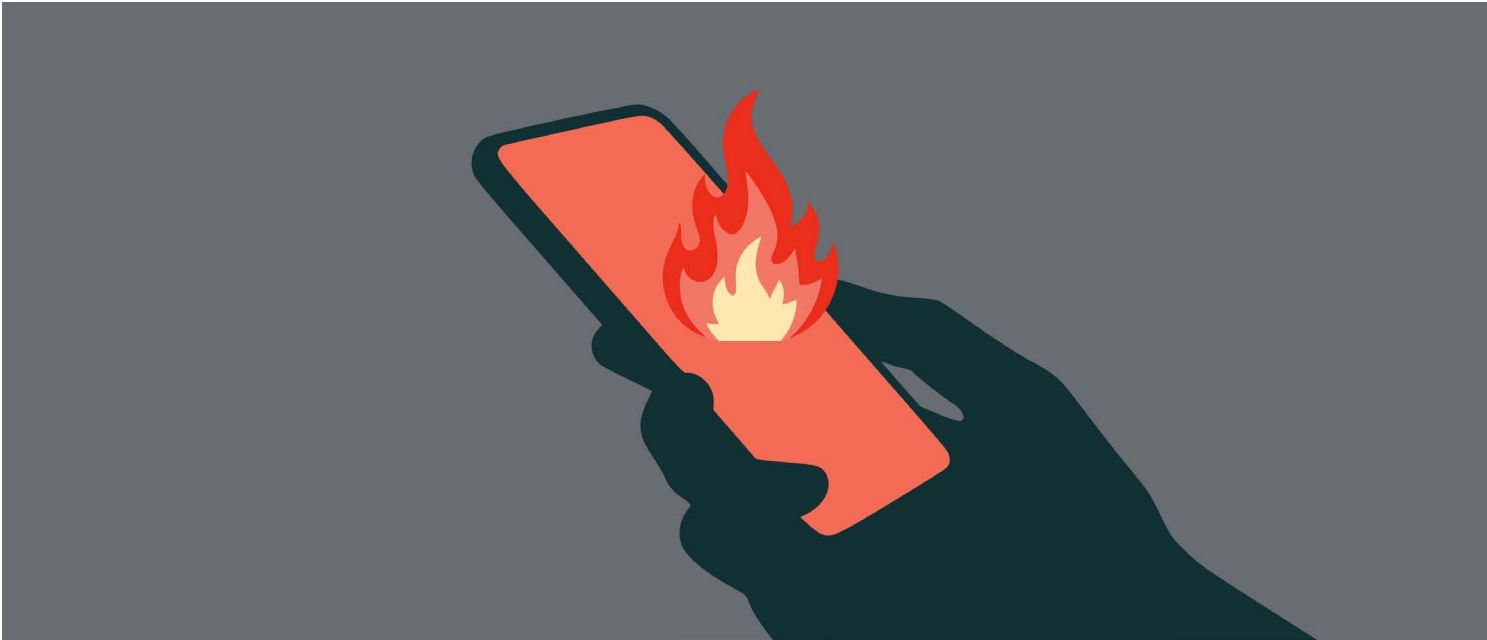
# DEMOS

Demos is Britain's leading cross-party think tank. Our mission is an upgraded democracy, with a new deal to mend the broken relationships between the state, institutions, and citizens.

This paper sets out the need to strengthen our information supply chains to enable greater democratic resilience. It is part of the Demos "New Deal" series, setting out our strategy to tackle the democratic emergency across four pillars: **Everyday Democracy, Public Service Reform, the Citizen Economy and Resilient Information Ecosystems.**

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July 2026.



# INTRODUCTION

## FUEL TO THE FIRE

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The pattern is becoming too familiar. A moment of tragedy or injustice is caught on camera and spreads on social media like wildfire. Devoid of context, it fuels rumour and fury. No one trusted explains what happened and so that fury mounts even further. Every other injustice people feel is channeled into a collective moment of outrage - then amplified beyond control.

Engagement-driven algorithms ensure millions have the chance to view, comment, share and ride each roar of collective anger. Political actors smell an opportunity to score points and drip poison into the mix. Conspiracy theories become conspiracy loops,<sup>1</sup> spiralling through communities, amplified out of the fringes by algorithms and national and international actors with huge followings. Weakened moderation systems barely scratch the surface.<sup>2</sup>

A hot mirage of social consensus is fabricated via bots and virality and goes unchecked. A location is identified, a time arranged to let that rage spill out against the actors perceived to be behind the events, and the authorities that failed to stop them. A real event is warped by distorted online discourse; conspiracy theories or untruths flow and result in violence in our home towns.

Whether that spark of tragedy is in Southport, Southampton or Belfast, this pattern towards anger and violent disorder has become predictable.

These flashpoints are not random events; they are a symptom of our democratic emergency: the loss of faith in fairness, justice, our safety and security - and the democratic system's failure to do anything about it. They are an expression of the disillusionment with the idea that the state can effectively respond to the public's needs and an attempt to demand that it takes back control.

<sup>1</sup> Demos (2024) [https://demos.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Conspiracy-Loops\\_Report.pdf](https://demos.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Conspiracy-Loops_Report.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Demos (2025) <https://demos.co.uk/research/researching-the-riots-an-evaluation-of-the-efficacy-of-community-notes-during-the-2024-southport-riots/>

Our online worlds are not the cause of this frustration, but they are a pivotal and toxic catalyst. The design of our platform-based information environment is fuelling mistrust and sewing division between us in ways which, over time, is becoming much harder to reverse and recover from.

The way information travels now reflects the collapse of people's trust in institutions. People are more likely to turn to someone they know, someone local, someone who feels like they 'get it' than they are a journalist, or government announcement. People feel chatbots are more objective than news organisations - even when they don't like AI. Live footage filmed by bystanders at the scene is felt to be more reliable than the BBC. A neighbourhood WhatsApp group is more trusted than a message from the council.

This turn to social media, personalised feeds, to live content, to trusted individuals, should be helping us feel less overwhelmed, less isolated, less frustrated and let down. But we find ourselves in an increasingly fractured reality, one where our own self-curated worlds distort our ability to connect with one another, to agree on where fact and common ground can be found. The worst thing is we know it. We are guilty scrollers, we are lost in the morass of information that we know we can't trust, and can see our online habits taking us away from the real world and people we love, but we are stuck.

Social media sucks our attention, spreads fake news and makes our children less safe. We feel insecure, targeted by cyberscammers and don't know what to believe. Our information security, and with it our democratic resilience, community cohesion and national security, is at risk. If we no longer share the same reality as a country, if we are divided by algorithms and physically separated by mobile phones, how can we act as fellow citizens in a democracy?

At Demos, we believe we are in a democratic emergency fuelled by the broken relationships between state and citizen, and between citizens. Democracy is in a doom loop whereby mistrust in institutions is inhibiting our ability to improve how the government and institutions deliver for people, further degrading trust. Our digital lives are a major accelerant of that doom loop, eroding our shared truths, the ability to reason and build consensus, or to show that democracy can deliver. At Demos, we are designing urgent, practical ways to upgrade democracy in order to rebuild that relationship. That includes the repairs urgently needed for a more resilient information ecosystem.

The public clearly wants this and is running out of patience. The popularity of the social media ban shows that people want the government to have these battles. But the challenge is so much bigger than a social media ban for under 16s. Successive governments have failed to tackle this and ceded power to digital platforms, distracted by the pursuit of growth and outgunned by big tech lobbying. The public sees this. The rampant effects of digital change on our lives symbolises our powerlessness, elite capture, and the resulting loss of faith in government to do anything about it.

The geopolitical threats and technological advances are not waiting. As the world becomes less secure, and our adversaries wage information wars, these issues are only becoming more pressing. Agentic AI is paving a future where citizens no longer need to enter shared online spaces to source and curate their information at all. Why engage in what is increasingly a degraded democratic discourse when a machine can do it for you? This will introduce whole new challenges to the equation. Our epistemic security<sup>3</sup> is at risk.

**To defend and upgrade our democracy, any government needs to build a more resilient information ecosystem. It needs to take back control.**

3 Demos (2025) [https://demos.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Epistemic-Security-2029\\_accessible.pdf](https://demos.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Epistemic-Security-2029_accessible.pdf)

# TAKING BACK CONTROL THE INFORMATION SUPPLY CHAIN

Rebuilding the relationship between citizens and indeed citizens and the state cannot begin without strengthening the resilience of our online information environment. For an upgraded democracy, citizens must be afforded the trustworthy information and spaces to effectively verify information, deliberate with one another and hold power to account.<sup>4</sup>

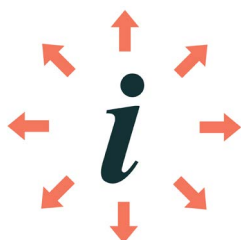
Previous efforts to tackle dysfunction in the information ecosystem have focused heavily on tackling mis and disinformation - how to limit the spread of fake news or counter it with fact checking. But it's helpful to think of the information environment that we occupy as an information supply chain spanning how information is produced, shared, consumed and how people collectively make sense of information to inform their judgements and decisions.

## THE INFORMATION SUPPLY CHAIN

Each stage of the information supply chain illustrated below is a combination of human knowledge, attitudes and behaviour, as well as information producers and technological infrastructure from recommender algorithms to AI agents at a global, national and local level.



Information  
production



Information  
distribution



Information  
acquisition and  
evaluation



Information  
deliberation and  
action



4 Higgins, 2025. [https://demos.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/VDA\\_Epistemic-Security\\_paper\\_October.pdf](https://demos.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/VDA_Epistemic-Security_paper_October.pdf)



## The information production stage

Historically, not enough attention has been paid to the supply of reliable trustworthy information compared to mis/disinformation. At the **information production** stage, all citizens need access to a supply of high quality trustworthy information. This requires diverse, public interest information producers like our public service broadcasters and news publishers and the emerging new creators, that are financially sustainable and produce content in formats that respond to citizens' needs and wants.

Importantly, the UK's information producers must be worthy of citizens' trust. This means that they are open and transparent about how they meet clear quality standards, such as good processes for verification, have strong systems of accountability, and, where appropriate, are demonstrably independent from the government. They need to earn that trust.

Citizens also need a plurality of information producers that provide stories with authenticity and credibility at a global, regional and local level. This means ensuring smaller local and independent producers have the capacity to innovate and sustain their connection with the communities they serve whether via third-party platforms or their own digital infrastructure. Regulatory frameworks that enable collective bargaining with big tech companies are needed to ensure local and independent content is visible in feeds and is being fairly recompensed, including if being scraped to fuel large language model providers.

But trusted information goes beyond journalism and news producers. Local institutional and embedded community actors, like the local government, the GP surgery, police, schools and sports clubs, are also critical information providers in our communities. These institutions, part of our democratic infrastructure, must experiment with their communications approaches to ensure they are connecting with communities in the digital spaces and moments they need it - avoiding the creation of voids that only widen and exacerbate mistrust, especially at key moments of vulnerability and tension.<sup>5</sup>

While the focus on securing the supply of high quality information is critical, identifying emergent forms of bad information also remains important for evaluating new forms of mis/disinformation that contribute to confusion and division. This requires establishing the research infrastructure and coordination that can assess the risks of bad information production be it through LLMs - hallucinations, deepfakes, bots and AI agents, or coordinated foreign interference.

<sup>5</sup> Demos (2024) <https://demos.co.uk/research/driving-disinformation-democratic-deficits-disinformation-and-low-traffic-neighbourhoods-a-portrait-of-policy-failure/>



## The information distribution stage

At the **information distribution** stage, trustworthy information needs to reach citizens when and where they need it. Fundamentally, citizens should have choice over how they consume information. In 2026, this is increasingly via intermediaries such as social media, video sharing platforms, search and AI chatbots and in time will increasingly be via AI agents.

Citizen choice over information distribution means being able to select which distribution channel to rely on, where access is guaranteed and that aligns with your values and preferences. This means being able to choose between different types of algorithm that serves you information - whether it is driven by engagement and your own personal behaviour, or an alternative value-set such as being shown a diversity and plurality of views and sources. This is technologically achievable but not regularly enough available.

It also means being able to choose chatbots or agents that only retrieve content from high quality sources or that recommend for you to turn elsewhere if it cannot guarantee accurate or non-biased information. This kind of user choice is difficult to come by in today's market that exudes foreign dependence across very limited corporate options; it requires British investment to build and new partnerships to access alternative digital public infrastructure that underpins our information environment.

Without alternative distribution channels, citizens should be able to discover and access original good quality information sources via existing private intermediaries. Amidst the variety of user-generated content and advertising, the prominence of good quality information, such as from our news publishers and public service broadcasters, would still be protected ensuring new generations still have the opportunity to discover public interest content and to diversify their tastes.

Specific protocols for how we respond if mis/disinformation is being distributed during crisis moments or elections are also important, including clarity about how existing rules apply in the context of different technologies. In a crisis, or an 'information crisis' e.g. if mis/disinformation is fuelling disorder, the government and platforms need clear protocols to follow that are transparent and can be trusted by the public. Similarly, in a scenario where mis/disinformation is threatening the integrity of an election, knowing how officials should respond could also strengthen trust.

Researchers, policymakers and industry should be able to analyse how information is being distributed to citizens with data access that provides insight into how algorithms are performing, the types of information that is being prioritised for visibility or down-ranked, or the number of referrals or click-throughs to news publishers and other original sources. As information distribution via social media algorithms, search and LLM-powered chatbots has become increasingly captured by corporate control, transparency and accountability for how companies are prioritising different types of content becomes even more important.



## The information acquisition & evaluation stage

At the **information acquisition and evaluation** stage, we need to ensure that citizens have the user design interfaces as well as the skills and resources to assess the reliability of the information they are consuming. Ideally, information that is now distributed via intermediaries, atomised and divorced from its original source, could carry with it clear signals of its provenance empowering citizens with the tools to evaluate its reliability. The mediating platforms would be mandated to equip users with clear labels and the ability to query or click through to credible sources to facilitate further critical appraisal or inquiry.

There is an urgent need for new ambition on media literacy - for young and older people alike. Beyond the online information environment, adults and children should be able to access training and resources that support them to navigate these new digital terrains, with the awareness, competency and confidence to evaluate and discover the information that meets their needs. Ideally this support would be available in a range of formats, from online video to radio or in-person, genres i.e. not just fact-based, but via comedy and drama, and relevant to a range of information topics whether it's relating to a crisis, money, health, politics and/or the attributes of different members of society.

Such training should be provided by those who can be considered reliable and credible teachers of critical media literacy skills in the relevant topic, including with consideration for vested interests and bias. This educational provision should be financially sustained not just by the government via the formal education system, but funded by the corporate intermediaries that enjoy and derive profits from the footprints of citizens throughout the worlds they have constructed. Such financial gains can help support the education providers who are most trusted by citizens embedded and available in their local communities for citizens of all ages and needs whether via someone's bank, religious institution, GP practice or within their own home.



## The information deliberation stage

At the **information deliberation** stage, citizens need to be able to make sense of the information they are consuming and inform their judgments with other citizens, including with those in their local area and those who may disagree with them. This requires not just online, but also offline spaces that are conducive to healthy and respectful democratic debate - facilitating discussion between those who may disagree and are exploring opportunities for greater understanding of alternative views and experiences, and common ground.

Such spaces need to be financially supported, but also managed by trustworthy intermediaries whether that is online group moderators, specifically designed technology, such as bridging algorithms, journalists or other key local community stakeholders. Crucially, such spaces are 'democracy-by-design' - designed to facilitate constructive dialogue that actually assists in strengthening the relationships between citizens, or indeed citizens and the state - rather than fracturing them yet further.

With policy, industry and community -led reforms at each stage of our information supply chain, we can begin the critical work of upgrading our democracy - providing the resources citizens need to effectively participate and deliberate with one another. No one link in the chain can be sufficient to strengthen the resilience of the whole information environment, but collectively as each new reform connects to the next, the web of democratic resilience will begin to take hold.

# FACE THE FIRE

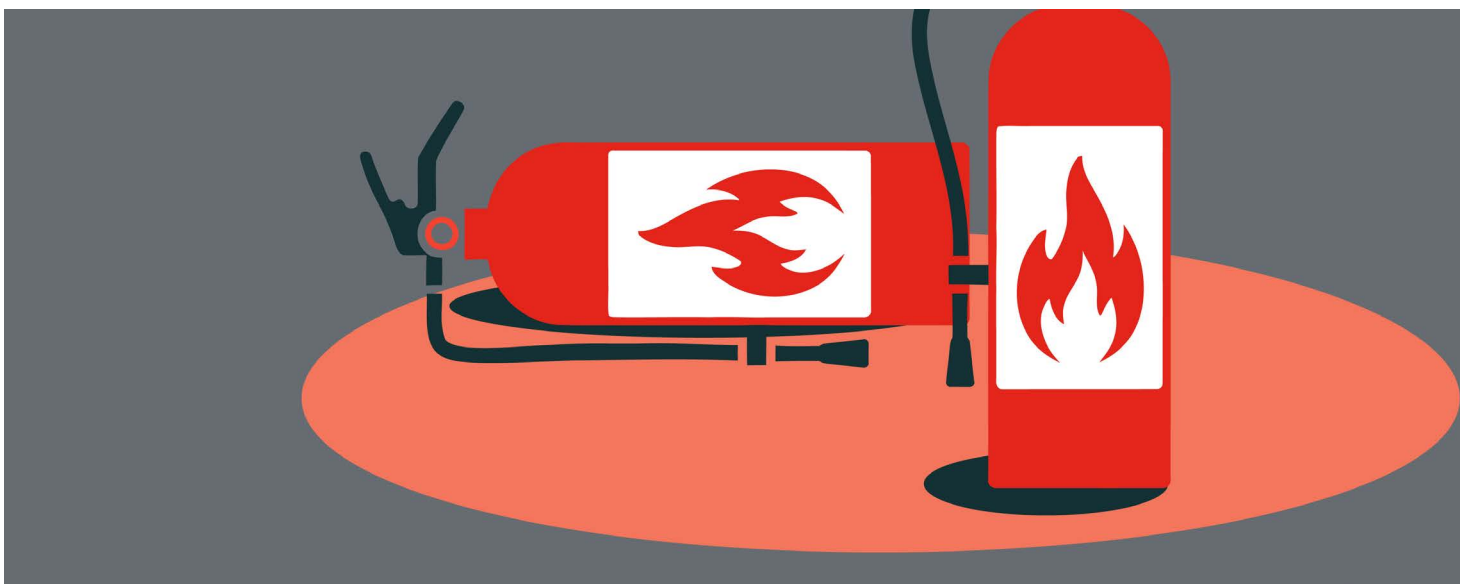
## A PLAN OF ACTION

### THE RISK OF INACTION AND ACTION

When the stakes are high, risk appetite often retreats. But as Keir Starmer has learned, the greatest risk in this moment of democratic emergency is to move too slowly, too passively or not at all. To continue ceding power to unaccountable platforms and model providers is to effectively fail to tackle one of the biggest aggravates of our democratic decline. It is to give up on an ambition to rebuild the relationship between the state and the citizen altogether. To continue offering piecemeal, uncoordinated breadcrumbs to different parts of the system, is to signal what could be done, but without the vision and firepower of a government that recognises the severity of our democratic emergency.

This is not to deny that there are perilous risks. Any government must also consider the economic potential of technological innovation, the perception of bias towards certain institutional actors that exacerbates public mistrust further, or worse the risk of facilitating state capture simply replacing that of corporations'. Introducing greater independence, transparency and accountability at every stage is crucial to maintaining public trust throughout any legislative reform agenda.

Another key risk is to see only legislation as the solution. Citizen needs and tastes have fundamentally transformed. There is no return to a historical information ecosystem that, while preferred by some, was also characterised by power imbalances and let down key segments of the population whose realities were under-represented or worse distorted. Investment in innovation and entrepreneurship to design novel alternative information formats, distribution and business models for our information ecosystem is therefore also critical. We need to embrace the advantages new technologies now afford us, with cheaper abilities for anyone - including those with a greater understanding of specific communities' needs - to be able to design and build British, regional and local alternatives that could empower and strengthen connection and ultimately contribute to our democratic health.



## A PLAN OF ACTION

Any government needs a plan to improve the information environment, with new ambition and vigour.

### 1. Get the house in order: set-out your vision and guiding principles

Move the Defending Democracy Taskforce (the DDTF) from the Home Office to Number 10 to be personally chaired by the Prime Minister, sending a clear signal that the vulnerabilities and threats to our information environment and democracy are both critical and urgent.

The Prime Minister should set out a clear vision for a resilient information environment that explains the pivotal role it plays for our democratic health, launching the 'Defending Democracy' Strategy and Action Plan. This should provide clear lines of accountability between departments and unlock a roll-call of decisive action to follow tackling the current siloes where inaction is being explained away by pointing the finger at another department.

Democracy is any Prime Minister's number one responsibility. It is their mandate and the reason for their job. They need to upgrade it and make it fit for the future.

### 2. Protect our most vulnerable moments during crises and elections

Information voids are a key driver of mistrust during crisis moments exacerbated even further during 'information crises' such as riot-inciting misinformation, deepfakes, or election-related disinformation. In the first 100 days, publish a high-level Government Information Crisis Response Protocol that sets out how information incidents are identified, assessed and responded to by both government and platforms. Strengthen coordination between national government, local authorities and civil society during major incidents where mis/disinformation is at the heart of the problem by amending the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to designate information crises as part of the Civil Contingency Framework.

Platform crisis responses are opaque, inconsistent and reactive - a clear vulnerability identified by the SIT Committee following the Southport riots. Ofcom's new crisis response protocols are too timid and clear gaps remain. Direct Ofcom to go further and mandate enforcement of platform crisis protocols, including common crisis definitions, severity levels, notification requirements, response timelines and public-interest prioritisation. Extend Ofcom's powers via an amendment to the Online Safety Act to achieve this.

In a digital age, elections and candidates are vulnerable to AI-generated deepfakes, false claims, coordinated manipulation and online abuse against candidates. These risks can undermine public trust, distort democratic debate and deter people — particularly women and minority representatives — from participating in politics. The active Representation of the People Bill provides a timely legislative vehicle to address these vulnerabilities. Three key recommendations will begin to address these challenges: add an "Elections Code" to the Online Safety Act via the Bill to curb online threats and abuse against candidates; clarify how election law applies to deepfakes and AI-generated text claims; and require platforms to transfer all paid-for political advertisements to a centralised ad-repository, giving the public the ability to verify adverts for themselves.

New AI legislation is needed that commits to safeguarding our elections from the misinformation and foreign interference risks AI introduces. This includes establishing baseline requirements for election safeguards including due accuracy and protections against bias, that AI providers must implement at all times, with heightened requirements during pre-election windows and increasing data access requirements to ensure there is greater transparency.

### 3. Strengthen our trustworthy information supply and its visibility

The BBC is critical public infrastructure and a precious part of our democratic landscape. It is a protective factor for democracy and common truths. In the current Charter Review process, it is essential that the BBC's independence from political interference and public accountability is strengthened. The government should remove the 10-year Charter expiry date and entrench the BBC's Object, Mission, Public Purposes, independence and universality in a perpetual, simplified Charter, amendable only by a "public lock" (one-off Citizens' Assembly plus a parliamentary majority). And they should end political appointments to the BBC Board replacing it with an Independent Appointments Commission and creating an Independent BBC Funding Commission, with Parliamentary Select Committee input. They should also embed representative public accountability in the BBC's governance through a Standing Citizens' Panel that is engaged on strategic priorities and financial plans where the Board must comply or explain if it seeks to diverge from the Panel's recommendations.

While there is significant policy debate about how to tackle harmful and misleading content, there must also be a strong focus on promoting the visibility of high-quality, trustworthy information where the public are already getting their information. A Green Paper has already been published by the government, with the consultation closing on 31 August, to begin to set the groundwork for this thinking. New legislation should follow that extends prominence rules that exist for linear TV to the platform environment including: introducing statutory prominence for public service broadcasters on video-sharing platforms such as YouTube and Tiktok, for content of high-civic-value; and algorithmic prominence for diverse public interest news on social media platforms through independently governed criteria that promotes trustworthiness, fairness, transparency, and media plurality.

Democratic safeguards for this new prominence regime will be critical to guard against state capture or preferential treatment for the loudest voices. Ensure new prominence rules are underpinned by co-regulatory oversight, robust appeals mechanisms, algorithmic transparency, and access to platform data for independent scrutiny.

We also recommend new investment in public interest content with a new Public Interest Content Fund paid for via a 5% levy on UK video-sharing platform revenues to support independent funding for UK-produced public interest audiovisual content and an expansion of the recently launched Local News Fund beyond the current £6million a year via the first Budget. Such public funds could be combined with philanthropy in a US-style £500m Press Forward fund. The government should also invest and encourage councils and combined authorities to communicate better with citizens in ways that reflect local networks and needs. This should tackle the current communication voids that have widened since austerity cuts decimated these crucial democratic functions that have since been filled with mis/disinformation.

### 4. Invest in a new era of innovation - new sovereign, digital public infrastructure that underpins information environments for communities around the country

Our current dependence on foreign digital infrastructure undermines our epistemic security and severely underestimates our capacity for innovation and opportunity for deeper, stronger connection. Begin by establishing the democratic values new technological developments should align to such as independence, transparency and accountability as well as de-proprietarisation and interoperability and the goals of its development such as civic participation, social cohesion, health and economic growth.

Pivot the existing UK Sovereign AI fund to ensure it meets these values and contributes towards a new sovereign AI model trained on high quality British datasets that the public can trust. Launch a new incubator for for-profit and non-profit open source ideas that unlock connection

and trust via new types of information actors, e.g. local media cooperatives, minority language networks, hosted by an independent trusted entity like the BBC. Reinstating the BBC's earlier purpose to deliver communications technology in the public interest and enable a new era of technological innovation for our public service media ecosystem. Launch a new international alliance and fund with middle power allied democracies, philanthropic and private investment to invigorate a new era of innovation for our cross-border information ecosystem that facilitates data portability frameworks, algorithmic transparency requirements, shared testing facilities and even a common market that undercuts the influence of US and Chinese technology firms.

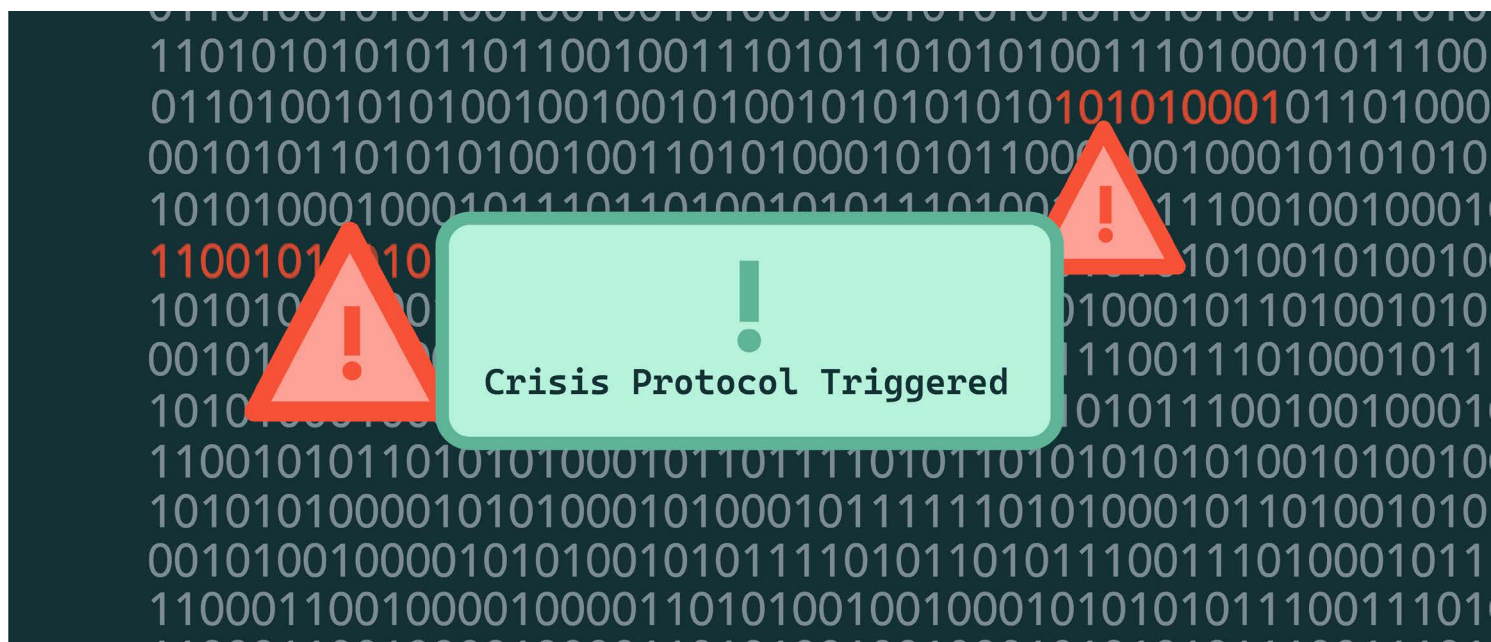
## 5. Build a coalition for this agenda

Whilst this plan needs to be progressed at pace, it is critical that the government develops a dedicated political, industry and public engagement strategy to accompany it. First, the government should aim to achieve as much cross-party support as possible for this agenda. These initiatives should not be politically controversial given their benefits to the democratic health of our nation. However, given the risks of introducing further bias or replacing corporate with state capture into the information environment, the government must pay as much attention to the democratic safeguards surrounding each initiative as to the initiative itself.

The introduction of regulation to online spaces should, rightly, prompt questions about how these changes will impact public freedoms. This is again why ensuring democratic safeguards are in place for any intervention is so critical. But, citizens must also be informed of the values that are guiding these interventions and why and how this agenda will ultimately provide greater choice, agency, control and connection in their lives, not less.

Some changes will have significant impacts for existing tech and media industry stakeholders as well as for civil society and local government. The government must ensure it is clear-sighted on any potential unintended consequences of its initiatives, including for local and independent providers, whose voices can often be missing in policy development and roll-out planning.

This democratic agenda requires strong, collaborative leadership. Having clear insight into and a plan for meeting the needs and concerns of all key parties is therefore critical to ensuring both the policy and the communication that surrounds it can be responsive and effective.



# CONCLUSION

## A NEW DEAL FOR OUR INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

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The stakes for our democracy and information environment are high. No-one who has spent time on social media examining the discourse during one of the riots in recent years can be in any doubt that the path forward is both urgent and laden with risk. So many people feel the consequences of this in their everyday lives - how tech divides not only the country and communities, but families as well. Anyone who has been locked out of a relationship with a family member or friendship, so convinced of your own respective senses of reality and confused by the fracturing of one another's interpretations, will know the time and hard work it will take to rebuild trust and common ground.

Inaction or carrying on with piecemeal measures is simply a dereliction of governance of our information environment at a time of democratic emergency. It is to accept that the doomloop of misinformation and mistrust cannot be tackled. Overreach or sudden knee-jerk movements without building the support and consensus surrounding the values that are guiding them could also exacerbate what is already a volatile polarised context. That's why brave leadership is needed to reverse the doomloop that is undermining any government's ability to deliver on its democratic promises.

Resetting and starting the hope loop must begin with levelling with the public - recognising the scale of the problem in our information environment and for our democracy - and coupling that recognition with a plan and a commitment to work across the House, industry and the public to fix it. There are already a number of policy initiatives, from crisis protocols and the prominence agenda, to the BBC Charter Review and the launch of the sovereign AI fund, that provide a running start to tackle these issues. But, the goals, level of ambition, pace and coherence with which these initiatives are pursued require the grip and confidence of brave leadership.

# WHAT DEMOS IS DOING ON **RESILIENT INFORMATION ECOSYSTEMS**

Since the origin of our specialist unit in 2012, formerly known as the Centre of Social Media Analysis, Demos Digital has been at the forefront of navigating a path through the digital world and its impacts on our policy and politics. Following the publication of our seminal [Epistemic Security 2029](#) paper in 2025, we launched our Epistemic Security programme. It is via this programme that we aim to secure the UK's information supply chains and break the cycle of misinformation and mistrust that is fuelling the democratic emergency through our research, convening, policy development and advocacy.

**Our research** has included evidencing the risks of and opportunities to strengthen [technology-driven content moderation systems](#) during crises, like the **Southport riots**, and the levels of false information and [electoral hallucinations](#) by **LLM-powered AI services** during the Scottish election to inform legislation that can safeguard our elections, including the Representation of the People Bill currently passing through the Commons.

At the time of writing, we are in the process of completing a mapping activity of the **information vulnerabilities in three towns and cities** across the UK to understand evolving information needs for local democracies using the case study of public engagement surrounding asylum accommodation. In Autumn 2025, we will be launching a number of pilots to inform new strategies for **strengthening local democratic discourse**, including for local Facebook group moderators, local government officials and councillors.

We are also currently finalising a study that through a novel methodology evidences the vulnerabilities in LLM-powered AI services to targeted manipulation efforts by malign state actors and are in the process of developing strategies for the FCDO, DSIT, AI companies and the emergent Generative Engine Optimisation industry to tackle this new threat. Finally, we are currently undergoing fieldwork that evaluates the social, economic and political impacts of online mis/disinformation about London on London and its communities to inform city-level strategies.

**We convene via our [Epistemic Security Network](#).** Here, we engage and facilitate discussion with academics, practitioners and industry, policymakers and cross-party Parliamentarians across multiple policy areas, from technology and media, to foreign policy, defence and home affairs, and communities - recognising how cross-cutting information ecosystem policy is. We curate a [biweekly newsletter](#) of the latest research, policy and Parliamentary activity impacting the information ecosystem for over 600 recipients and convene online Network meetings monthly where we host speakers and facilitate research and policy discussions of c.30-40 expert attendees across pertinent policy topics.

**Our policy development** focuses on the most pressing challenges to our information environment. We have sought to demonstrate the interconnected nature of the risks in our information environment and how its vulnerabilities can exacerbate crises. Our policy work to tackle [Crisis Resilience](#), particularly platform crisis vulnerabilities highlighted through our [Community Disorder paper](#) and [submission to Ofcom](#), has influenced the [platform crisis protocols](#) recently announced by Ofcom. Our emphasis on how information voids contribute to conspiracism in local communities in [Driving Disinformation](#) also helped evidence the launch of the government's new [Local Media Action Plan](#).

We also focus on the **risks to elections**, convening a coalition of Epistemic Security Network members to influence the Representation of the People Bill with [key protections](#), particularly on political deepfakes and the need for an critical information incident protocol to use during an election period. In partnership with Emily Darlington MP and cross-party support, we have tabled a number of amendments that aim to strengthen the Bill and hope that these may be accepted at Report Stage.

**The BBC Charter Review** also provides an opportunity to strengthen this critical backstop in our information environment. We have advocated for a range of complementary constitutional and governance reforms, set out in Our [BBC paper](#) and our submission to the DCMS consultation, that would strengthen the independence and accountability of the BBC some of which were supported within the BBC's response to the DCMS Green Paper. We have also convened a number of Network meetings and roundtables to help stimulate the debate, provided Parliamentary briefings as well as giving oral evidence to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee during their BBC Inquiry.

We have also been advocating for statutory **prominence** for public interest information on both video sharing platforms and social media. We have convened a range of industry and policy stakeholders to inform ideas presented in [Fairer Feeds](#) and were delighted to see some of our recommendations included in the DCMS's own Green Paper, '[Watch This Space](#)'.

Finally we are currently developing policy ideas for routes to strengthening our '**epistemic sovereignty**', the autonomy and agency the UK has over the digital infrastructure that underpins our information environment and extent to which it reflects the UK's democratic values. This will provide a platform for identifying routes to improving the funding ecosystem surrounding innovation and entrepreneurship for alternative digital spaces and products designed in the public interest - providing alternative spaces for citizens to deliberate and strengthen their relationships with one another.

**If you are interested in any of the above please contact [hannah.perry@demos.co.uk](mailto:hannah.perry@demos.co.uk).**

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# DEMOS

PUBLISHED BY DEMOS JULY 2026

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