

Today's figures show the Government's abysmal record on living standards is getting even worse – Debbie Abrahams

Labour's Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary Debbie Abrahams, commenting on today's Labour Market Statistics, **said**:

“While we welcome the fall in unemployment, today's figures show the Government's abysmal record on living standards is getting even worse.

“Real wages are now stagnating under the Tories and working families are worse off as a result.

“The Government has also failed to close the employment gap faced by women, disabled people and ethnic minority groups, who are all less likely to be in work. Labour will stand up for all working people.

“We will introduce a Real Living Wage of £10 per hour and reverse cuts to in-work support that could see some families worse off by £2,600 a year.”

Ends

Labour launches Pensioners' Pledge Card

Speaking today (Wednesday 12 April) on a visit to an arts and crafts exhibition at Age UK Coventry's Craft and Computer Centre, the Shadow Chancellor and Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, will launch Labour's Pensioners' Pledge Card.

The Pensioners' Pledge Card lays out Labour's four promises to protect older people in our communities:

- Protect pensioner incomes by legislating to keep the Triple-Lock on state pensions up to 2025
- End Tory unfairness on the women's pension age, compensating those worst affected
- Protect the pensions of UK citizens living overseas
- Keep the Winter Fuel Allowance and free bus passes for pensioners

Alongside the pledge card, Labour will publish new analysis from the House of

Commons Library showing pensioners will be at least £650 better off by the end of the next parliament from keeping the triple-lock.

Highlighting an increase in pensioner poverty over the last year, Labour will also commit to compensating women worst affected by the Government's speeding-up of the state pension age; protecting pensioner benefits and protecting the pensions of UK citizens living abroad.

John McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, will say:

"I am delighted to be launching this pledge card that will inform many elderly people in our communities that Labour is not only promising to stand up for pensioners; but is determined to ensure they keep the hard-won entitlements they currently hold.

"It's a national scandal that pensioner poverty is rising and the Tories are refusing to commit to keeping the triple-lock or compensate women worst affected by the speeding up in the state pension age.

"Only a Labour Government will stand up for pensioners and protect them throughout the next parliament."

LABOUR'S PROMISE TO PENSIONERS

- ✓ Protect pensioner incomes by legislating to keep the Triple-Lock on state pensions up to 2025.
- ✓ End Tory unfairness on the women's pension age, compensating those worst affected.
- ✓ Protect the pensions of UK citizens living overseas.
- ✓ Keep the Winter Fuel Allowance and free bus passes for pensioners.



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FOR YOU**

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The Tories are letting down asylum seekers and the communities where they

are allocated – Abbott

Diane Abbott MP,
Labour's Shadow Home Secretary, commenting on the Government's failure to ensure a fair system of allocation for asylum seekers, said:

"The Government's policy is deeply flawed and unfair. When it comes to the settling of asylum seekers, it's a case of Tory nimbyism.

"They are overwhelmingly allocated to poorer areas. Ministers have also cut funding, even for councils that have capacity to take more.

"By failing to institute a fair system of allocation, or a fair system of funding, the Tories are letting down asylum seekers and the communities where they are allocated."

Ends

Sharon Hodgson response to Scottish Medicines Consortium's decision to provide Kadcyla and PrEP on the NHS

Sharon Hodgson MP, Shadow Minister for Public Health, commenting on the Scottish Medicines Consortium's decision to provide Kadcyla and PrEP on the NHS, said:

"It is welcoming to see that both Kadcyla and PrEP will now be funded by the NHS in Scotland, after the concerted campaigning of different organisations and individuals who will benefit directly by these drugs now being made accessible.

"These decisions are game-changing. Not only in the fact that they will help the many

people in Scotland who rely upon these drugs, but also by highlighting a failure to act here in England, where Kadcyla has been provisionally rejected by NICE and is now under review and PrEP, which faced a long, drawn-out court battle, is going through yet another trial.

“These announcements must make NHS England and Jeremy Hunt sit up and listen. We need concerted action to ensure we don’t see disparities in the drug treatments on offer in Scotland and England. The Tory Government should be doing all they can to provide access to these treatments for those who need them.”

Libor rigging – schools, hospitals, local councils all potential victims – Shadow Chancellor demands compensation for public bodies

Libor rigging – schools, hospitals, local councils all potential victims – Shadow Chancellor demands compensation for public bodies

Local councils, NHS hospitals and schools engaged with PFI contracts, derivatives linked to Libor and day-to-day borrowing could be large scale victims of Libor rigging.

Yesterday, Shadow Chancellor, John McDonnell MP, called for the Chancellor to establish a public inquiry into the scandal. He is today demanding an independent assessment of the losses to public bodies and that where losses are identified as a result of Libor rigging, they must be made good by the banks.

Revelations by the BBC’s Panorama programme concerning the involvement of the Bank of England and senior officials from major banks in the rigging of the Libor index raise urgent questions for the Bank of England and the Government:

- Did senior Bank of England officials, in allegedly applying pressure to banks to lowball their reported borrowing rates, act with or without the knowledge of Treasury officials and ministers?
- Was the Bank or Treasury aware of the potential costs to public authorities as a result of lowballing?

– How many public bodies have losses arising from their purchase of Libor-linked derivative products, and what are the scale of those losses?

John McDonnell MP said:

"This is now a matter of utmost concern that gets to the heart of failings in our banking system. Did senior officials at the Bank of England, with or without government encouragement, knowingly cause public bodies like NHS hospitals, schools and local councils to suffer potentially major losses?

"My concern is that local councils, NHS hospitals, and schools could have paid a huge cost for the Libor rigging scandal. We need to know exactly what went on, what was the impact on public finances and who was responsible.

Above

all else if local councils and other public bodies suffered losses then the institutions responsible should pay them back for those losses."