

[Nia Griffith responds to Armed Forces Diversity Statistics](#)

Nia Griffith MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary for Defence, responding to today's Armed Forces Biannual Diversity Statistics, said:

"What today's findings show is that progress has been very slow and the proportion of female representation in the UK Regular Forces has risen by less than a percent since October 2012. Although things are slightly better with BAME personnel there is still much more work that needs to be done.

"There needs to be a step change with recruitment and retention if we're to meet the targets of 10% BAME and 15% female personnel in our Armed Forces. We also need to see vast improvements when it comes to getting female and BAME personnel into the highest ranks.

"Our diversity is a great strength to our society and can be to our Armed Forces but more needs to be done. The Government said they would bring forward new strategic equality objectives in Autumn 2017 but nothing has been published.

"If they are serious about their diversity targets, the Government must publish a new diversity strategy as soon as possible".

[Jonathan Ashworth responds to Care Quality Commission's findings](#)

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, responding to the Care Quality Commission's findings that many independent clinics that provide residential detoxification are not providing safe or good quality care, said:

"This damning report illustrates a disgraceful failure by the private sector to provide vulnerable drug and alcohol addicts with the safest and best quality treatment available. Helping those with alcohol and drug addiction issues is a personal priority of mine and this report is yet more evidence that we simply aren't doing anywhere near enough to deal with addiction in society.

"The Tories have slashed vital alcohol and drug treatment programmes by £43 million this year, forcing many to turn to the independent sector for help.

"The report also highlights the inadequacies of expecting the private sector to provide the level of service needed and as such we will need to build

capacity in the public sector.

“Labour will reverse these damaging public health cuts to important addiction services and ensure everyone receives the best possible treatment they deserve.”

The Government must bring to an end the costly failure that is privatised rail – Andy McDonald

Andy McDonald MP, Labour’s Shadow Transport Secretary, responding to the failure of the East Coast franchise, said:

“The Government is trying to bury the news that they’re giving Stagecoach and Virgin a get out of jail free card to walk away from their franchise and a potential £2billion of payments to the Treasury.

“It is outrageous that the Transport Secretary Chris Grayling is refusing to answer what the true cost to the public purse will be.

“Under public ownership, the East Coast Mainline returned over £1bn to the Treasury, outperformed its commercial competitors and kept fares down when no private operators made the same move.

“When the Tories cynically re-privatised the line on the eve of the 2015 General Election, they said the decision would deliver for the British taxpayer, but we’re now being left with a colossal tab.

“The Government must now come clean and reveal the true cost to the public purse of this decision and bring to an end the costly failure that is privatised rail.”

Google legal challenge seeks to bring justice to millions who may have had data unlawfully collected – Liam Byrne

Liam Byrne MP, Labour's Shadow Digital Minister, responding to the news that Google are facing legal action for alleged unlawful data collection, said:

"The scale of this case shows the imbalance of power between everyday people and the companies that Hoover up their data to make money.

"Google 'You Owe Us' legal challenge seeks to bring justice to the millions of people who may have had their data unlawfully collected and, if successful, will ensure companies like Google act in good faith when it comes to users' data.

"The Data Protection Bill is currently going through Parliament and Labour will be aiming to put trust at the heart of the UK's new data protection system to ensure companies can innovate but only if they collect and use data responsibly."

This is just the latest evidence that the Government should abandon their privatisation of the student loan book – Angela Rayner

Angela Rayner MP, Labour's Shadow Education Secretary, commenting on reports the Government are set to lose £800m from the private sale of student loans, said:

"This is just the latest evidence that the Government should abandon their privatisation of the student loan book.

"In the Budget, they promised to assess value for money before any sale. We now know that they have lost £800m of taxpayer's money on this sale.

"This cannot possibly be value for money, and they should change course now before even more of our cash is wasted on their ideologically driven plans."