

## In the face of a housing crisis getting worse by the day, this is a feeble announcement – John Healey

**John Healey MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Housing,**

responding to a government call for evidence on whether a new system of regulation for letting and management agents is needed, said:

“In the face of a housing crisis getting worse by the day, this is a feeble announcement. This isn't even a commitment to act, it's a commitment to ask some questions. After seven years of failure on housing, Ministers need to do much better than this.

“Rather than just asking whether renters and leaseholders need better protections, Ministers should act on Labour's proposals to end the building of new leasehold homes, cap rises in ground rents, and back our plan for new consumer protections for private tenants including a control on rent rises, a ban on letting fees and new minimum standards.”

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## Real wages falling yet again is deeply concerning – Margaret Greenwood

**Margaret Greenwood MP, Labour's Shadow Employment Minister,** commenting on today's Labour Market Statistics from ONS, said:

“With a record number of working people living in poverty, the news that real wages have fallen yet again is deeply concerning.

“While the overall increase in employment is welcome, it's also clear from today's figures that too many people are struggling to find employment because of their age, ethnicity, disability, or where they live.

“The

Tories' cuts to in-work support are making matters even worse for working families. That's why it's so crucial the Government urgently listens to Labour's call to pause the roll out and fix Universal Credit."

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## [Conservatives have finally listened to Labour and scrapped premium phone helpline for claimants – Debbie Abrahams](#)

**Debbie Abrahams MP,**  
**Labour's Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary,** commenting on today's Universal Credit statistics, said:

"The increase in the number of people on Universal Credit is worrying given the Government's chaotic handling of its roll out.

"The Conservatives have finally listened to Labour and scrapped the premium phone helpline for claimants, now they need to listen to the calls of charities and councils and back Labour's motion today to immediately pause and fix the roll out of Universal Credit, before more people are pushed into rent arrears, poverty and homelessness."

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## [Government is out of step with rest of the world when it comes to tackling tax avoidance – Peter Dowd](#)

**Peter Dowd MP,**  
**Labour's Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury,** commenting on the Public Accounts Committee report on tackling online VAT fraud and error:

"The Public Accounts Committee report reiterates once again that this Conservative

Government is completely out of step with the rest of the world when it comes to tackling tax avoidance. Despite having an array of unused new powers, HMRC continues to be outfoxed by large multinational corporations who do not charge VAT and it is British businesses who are paying for it.

“Instead of continuing his deluded pursuit of further cuts and more austerity, the Chancellor should take seriously on board the recommendations in this report and tackle VAT fraud which is costing taxpayers billions of pounds a year.

“The next Labour government will introduce our Tax Transparency and Enforcement Programme which will clamp down on tax avoidance and VAT fraud, so we can build an economy which works for the many, not the few.”

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## [Labour announce backing for public inquiry into mesh implants scandal](#)

Labour will today (Wednesday 18 October) announce the party's backing for a public inquiry into the use of surgical mesh implants.

Labour will also call for use of the products to be stopped in England immediately while the inquiry is undertaken.

The call comes as MPs prepare to discuss the impact of mesh implants in a debate called by Emma Hardy, MP for Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle, taking place in Westminster Hall at 9.30am on Wednesday.

**Sharon Hodgson MP, Labour's Shadow Public Health Minister**, speaking ahead of today's debate, said:

“Mesh implants have left women in permanent pain, unable to walk, and unable to work. This is an ongoing public health scandal and the Government need to do much more to support those affected.

“Ministers have said NICE will publish updated guidance for these products but not until January 2018. Mesh implants should be taken off the market now until we know more about the threat they pose to women's safety.

“The

Government have failed to answer big questions about the extent of this public

health scandal, including how many women have been affected and why a product with such terrible risks was allowed into the market in the first place.

“Labour

is calling for a full inquiry to uncover the extent of the harm done by mesh implants so we can be sure that this never happens again.”