

Today's High Court decision is a further demonstration of the failure of this government's austerity agenda – Jeremy Corbyn and Debbie Abrahams

Jeremy Corbyn MP,

Leader of the Labour Party, commenting on today's High Court judgement that the Benefit

Cap unlawfully discriminates against single parents with children aged two or under, said:

"Today's High Court decision is a further demonstration of the failure of this government's austerity agenda. It is failing in its own terms, it's failing our communities, and it's failing the most vulnerable in our country – including the victims of domestic violence and those facing homelessness.

"Labour has stood against the benefit cap, its discrimination against parents with children and the government's cruel austerity programme.

"Our Shadow Foreign Secretary, Emily Thornberry MP, tabled an amendment to the Benefit Cap legislation to exclude families with children under two from the cap when it came before parliament.

"The Government should have listened to Labour then, but I am pleased the High Court has listened to these courageous campaigners now.

"The Prime Minister should accept the High Court's judgement and end this discrimination against parents and children."

Debbie Abrahams MP,

Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, commenting on the judgement, said:

"I welcome the court's decision on the Benefit Cap today, and commend the brave campaigners who took this case against the Government on behalf of the 17,000 families affected.

"This is another damaging blow to the Government's failing austerity agenda. While many families have struggled to make ends meet, this Government has given hand-outs to some of the richest in our society.

"The social security

system should be there for us all in our time of need.

“For too long this Government has pushed children into poverty, as punishment for their parent’s circumstances.

“I therefore welcome the High Court’s judgement that this policy is unlawful, which marks another blow in their failing austerity agenda.

“Labour will transform the social security system so that, like the NHS, it is there for us all in our time of need.”

Jeremy Corbyn response to the Prime Minister’s Grenfell Tower statement

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party, responding to the Prime Minister’s statement to the House on Grenfell Tower, said:

Can I start by expressing my disappointment to the Prime Minister at the lack of advance sight of her statement.

I met with the survivors of Grenfell Tower and those inspiring volunteers co-ordinating the relief effort for families who had lost so much. I hope the whole House will join with me in commending the community spirit and public support which helped so many traumatised families.

Our love, our condolences and our solidarity goes out to those families again today and in the difficult days and weeks ahead.

They were, as the Prime Minister said yesterday, let down: both in the immediate aftermath and so cruelly beforehand. And the public inquiry must establish the extent and by whom.

At least 79 people are dead. It is both a tragedy and an outrage because every single one of those deaths could have been avoided.

The Grenfell Tower residents themselves had raised concerns about the lack of fire safety in their block.

The Grenfell Action Group had warned, and I quote, “It is a truly terrifying thought but the Grenfell Action Group firmly believes that only a catastrophic event will expose the ineptitude and incompetence of our

landlord,
the Kensington & Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation”.

The Prime Minister said “It is right that the CEO of Kensington & Chelsea has now resigned”. It may be, but why aren’t the political leaders taking responsibility too?

From Hillsborough, to the child sex abuse scandal, to Grenfell Tower the pattern is consistent. Working class people’s voices are ignored, their concerns dismissed, by those in power.

The Grenfell Tower residents and north Kensington community deserve answers and thousands of people living in tower blocks around the country need urgent reassurance.

Our brave firefighters must never have to deal with such a horrific incident again.

Those of us with over 30 years’ experience in this House would have struggled under the pressure generated by an incident of this scale. So as I said yesterday, my Honourable Friend for Kensington deserves praise for the tireless and diligent way she has stood up for her constituents.

They need answers and the public inquiry must address:

The apparent failure of the fire alarms at Grenfell Tower, which meant many residents reported they were only alerted to the fire by the screams of their neighbours.

Whether the advice given to tenants to stay in their homes was correct and what advice should be given to the people living in the 4,000 other tower blocks around our country.

Why sprinklers were not installed and whether they now should be retrofitted into all tower blocks.

Whether the cladding used was illegal, as the Chancellor has suggested, and whether it should be banned entirely and what wider changes must be made to building regulations and to fire prevention regulations, including the frequency and enforcement of fire safety checks.

Whether tenant management organisations are responsive enough to their tenants and what greater powers tenants need.

Whether survivors and people evacuated from adjacent properties were rehoused promptly and adequately and whether they will all be rehoused within the borough with no increase in their rent.

The resources available to the Fire & Rescue Service, and whether response times and capacity are adequate in all areas of the country, since the

number of wards in which response time targets are not being met has increased tenfold since 2011.

Lessons must be learned in the public inquiry and a disaster that never should have happened must never happen again.

The Government must delay no longer and now implement the recommendations of the 2013 inquiry report following the Lakanal House fire.

The public inquiry into Grenfell Tower must also establish whether lives could have been saved if those recommendations had have been implemented in full and if the recommendations of the All-Party Parliamentary Group had been heeded by government.

Fire safety measures cannot be left to a postcode lottery so I ask the government make available emergency funds as my Honourable Friend for Leeds West also asked yesterday, so that councils can carry out fire safety checks and install sprinklers, and the timetable for that made known to residents.

Will the Prime Minister also ensure that counselling and mental health services are available to all the residents of Grenfell Tower and those who witnessed it unfold on the Lancaster West Estate, including the emergency services who responded.

Mr Speaker, the public inquiry must report as soon as possible and changes that can and should have been made already must now be made without delay.

Celebrating digital skills in Welsh teaching

The NDLE brings together educators from across Wales to identify and share examples of good digital practice currently taking place in schools and colleges across Wales.

Changes to the Welsh curriculum mean digital skills are now developed and taught through all parts of a pupil's schooling and not just isolated to specific ICT or computer science classes.

The Cabinet Secretary said this new approach means more than just using computers and she wants to equip pupils with the digital skills necessary to succeed in the modern world.

Kirsty Williams said, "I am determined to support learners in Wales so that not only are they competent users of technology, but that they become

creative authors of technology also.

“I am clear we need to help both teachers and learners develop the skills and confidence to navigate this new world and make good use of the opportunities it provides.

“I am delighted to be here to celebrate the work of our finest practitioners and hope we can all learn something from the very best and brightest in our profession.”

The theme for NDLE 2017 is ‘Creative approaches to implementing the Digital Competence Framework’ building on the introduction of the Digital Competence Framework on 21 September 2016.

The Digital Competence Framework (DCF) was developed by Pioneer schools supported by external expertise and Welsh Government staff. At the beginning of this school year, the Digital Competence Framework was made available to schools in Wales, and this is the first element of the new curriculum to be introduced in Wales.

The Cabinet Secretary was keen to praise the work of all schools in integrating the DCF and explained how her office had been inundated with positive comments, from the UK and around the world, about Wales’ commitment to and ambition for digital skills

This year’s National Digital Learning Awards recognises the best digital practice in four categories, and the winners for each of those categories were as follows:

- Digital Project Award – awarded jointly to Year 2 pupils at Cadoxton Primary School, Barry for their project ‘Challenging Pioneers’, and Ysgol Bro Banw, Ammanford, for their project ‘The Superheroes’.
- Online Safety Award – also Ysgol Bro Banw, for their project Developing Digital Competence through flip teaching.
- Hwb Community Resource Award – Alexandra Roe from Coedcae School, Llanelli, for the WJEC RS Judaism Playlist.
- National Digital Learning Council’s Pupil Award – Phillipstown Primary in New Tredegar, for Techno Tribe Teaches.

These figures reveal the scale of the crisis the Tories have created for our

[schools – Angela Rayner](#)

Angela Rayner MP, Labour's Shadow Education

Secretary, commenting on the release of the Schools Workforce statistics showing that more teachers are leaving the profession than joining, said:

"These figures reveal the scale of the crisis the Tories have created for our schools.

"The Government's responsibility is to ensure our schools have the resources they need to train enough teachers. The Tories have failed to do so.

"This is a damning verdict on seven years of failure from Conservative governments, and without urgent action on teacher recruitment and retention, a generation of children will pay the price for that failure."

[Press release: New M40 noise barriers: opportunity to find out more](#)

A £5 million plan to cut traffic noise for many people living along an 11.5 mile section of the M40 in Buckinghamshire and South Oxfordshire is now on show .

Highways England will install new noise reducing barriers at eight locations along the M40 between Loudwater (near junction 3 of the motorway) and Stokenchurch (near junction 5) in Buckinghamshire.

The plans are now available online, and a public event will be held on 30 June in High Wycombe. Construction is due to start in the autumn.

existing noise reduction barriers along the M40

Highways England project manager David Owen said:

These new barriers will help to cut traffic noise for many people living in these eight locations. Together with the resurfacing work that we have already completed, they should bring real improvements for communities along the M40.

We have been working hard with our partners to make sure that the plans will deliver the most benefit for the greatest number of people, and we're now able to share our plans with people locally and answer their questions. This is a great opportunity to find out more before we start work, both online and in person, so please visit our website and come and see us on 30 June.

The proposals have been developed by Highways England in partnership with the M40 Chiltern Environmental Group (M40 CEG), Wycombe District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council.

The noise reduction barriers will be installed at the following locations:

- Stokenchurch
- Wheeler End/Lane End
- Booker Cressex
- Daws Lea
- Flackwell Heath
- Loudwater
- Wooburn Moor (north)
- Wooburn Moor (south)

Information about the project including the proposed nature and exact location of the barriers is available online now, and a public information event where people will be able to talk to the project team, will take place on 30 June between 1pm and 8pm at Wycombe Leisure Centre, Handy Cross, High Wycombe, HP11 1UP.

For further details and to keep up to date about the project, [visit the scheme website](#). If you have any further queries about the project, please email us at M40noise@highwaysengland.co.uk

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.