

Theresa May must be straight with the British people on her plans for pensioners, working people and our public services

Labour is today

(Monday 29 May 2017) calling on Theresa May to come clean with the British people and answer the most pressing questions she has failed to be straight about in this campaign.

The Conservative

manifesto has betrayed Britain's pensioners, threatened unspecified tax rises for tens of millions of working people and set out a grim future of underfunding and understaffing for our vital public services.

Given that the

Conservative leader has already broken her flagship manifesto pledge on social care,

we are challenging Theresa May to be straight with voters and give clear answers to the crucial questions she has continued to duck.

Questions

Theresa May must answer today:

1. Will Theresa May confirm that ten million pensioners will lose their winter fuel payments if the Conservatives are re-elected? And if not ten million, how many will it be?
2. At what level will the cap be set on social care costs that those with conditions such as dementia will have to pay under Conservative plans?
3. Will Theresa May match Labour's pledge not to raise personal National Insurance contributions, and not to raise income tax for 95 per cent of taxpayers?
4. Will the Conservatives confirm they are planning another five years of austerity for public services, as the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) stated last week?
5. The Conservatives have warned they will scrap free school meals for 5-7 year olds if they are re-elected. Will they now spell out a realistic costing for their school breakfast proposal now they have

withdrawn their discredited 6.8p figure?

6. Will Theresa May confirm she is proposing not a single penny of extra funding for the NHS, as the IFS has stated?

Theresa May has a track record of breaking her promises, flip-flopping and going back on her word. Ahead of tonight's live televised interview and Q&A, Labour is calling on the Conservative leader to be straight with people and set out exactly what she's planning for our pensioners, working people and school children.

Andrew Gwynne, Labour's National Election Coordinator, said:

"The Tory manifesto has plunged pensioners and working people into insecurity, and left our public services facing the risk of further crisis. Meanwhile, Theresa May refuses to answer even the most basic questions on her policies.

"Today, Labour sets out some of the most pressing questions the Tories keep dodging. So if you get a knock at the door from the Tories or are one of the few people who isn't a Tory party member to meet Theresa May or Philip Hammond, ask them to provide answers.

"Failure to do so will lead people to draw their own conclusions. But ultimately it proves that voting for the Tories at this election is a dangerous roll of the dice for working people and pensioners.

"Their manifesto threatened to take away winter fuel allowances, ditch the triple lock and leave pensioners facing the loss of control of their homes because of social care costs. It makes clear the Tories are planning five more years of austerity for our public services, with no guarantee to not raise taxes for 95 per cent of taxpayers.

"Having broken her flagship pledge on social care just days after she launched her manifesto, Theresa May needs to give clear answers to these crucial questions and be straight with the British people about what the Tories are actually planning."

Green Party launches disability manifesto demanding empowerment for d/Deaf and disabled people



29 May 2017

***Jonathan Bartley and Ben Fletcher, first ever Deafblind parliamentary candidate, to highlight struggle against cuts**

***Disabled people entitled to basic rights and opportunities being removed by Conservative Government**

The first Deafblind person ever to stand for Parliament in the UK, Ben Fletcher, will join Green Party Co-Leader Jonathan Bartley today (Monday 29 May) at the launch of the Greens' disability manifesto (1) in Putney, south west London.

Ben, born profoundly Deaf (2) and partially sighted (3), who is standing as the Green Party candidate for Putney, Roehampton and Southfields, said:

"Disabled people are desperately under-represented in public life in Britain. At a time of deep disillusionment with politics in the UK, it is really important for the MPs elected in 2017 to reflect the diversity of the people they are meant to represent.

"There are over 11 million disabled people in Britain. That's one in six. And yet many of us are still prevented from participating fully in education, in employment, and in politics because of inflexible, outdated attitudes, needless barriers to access and a general lack of understanding about what disabled people can really achieve if they receive the support they need."

Jonathan Bartley, who co-leads the Green Party as a job share so he can support his disabled son Samuel, will attack the Government's record on supporting disabled people and present a bold alternative vision:

"This General Election is about the kind of country we want to live in. Is it the kind of country the Tories tell us we must accept, in which austerity cuts are inflicted on those least able to withstand their impact, including disabled people who already face huge barriers to basic equality?

"The Green Party refuses to accept that the UK, as the fifth largest economy, cannot do better. The Government should focus on removing the real barriers to disabled people finding work, and tackle the widespread prejudice against disabled people rather than fostering it."

The Green Party's disability manifesto highlights the daily struggle disabled people continue to face, from their battle to hold on to essential Personal Independence Payments (PIPs), the recent loss of £30 per week for people in

the Employment Support Allowance Work Group, and the scrapping of the Independent Living Allowance which enabled disabled people to live autonomous and dignified lives, to the over 40% reduction in the number of d/Deaf, disabled and older people receiving social care due to slashed budgets.

At the heart of the Greens' disability manifesto is a plan for a community-led Care & Support Service where we will train, support and resource communities to better help each other and the most vulnerable in our society, at the same time saving money by supporting wellbeing and helping communities to identify and meet their needs, alongside councils, the NHS and Government.

Ben Fletcher, 36, who lives in Southfields with his partner Lauren, works as Lead Developer for FT.com at the Financial Times. His first language is British Sign Language (BSL) (4). The Green Party is campaigning for full recognition of BSL as an official language of the UK.

He decided to stand for Parliament despite the closure of the Access to Elected Office Fund (5) by the Conservative government after the last General Election. The fund, which provided financial support to disabled candidates standing for political office, has never been reopened, despite a recommendation to do so by the Equality and Human Rights Commission in September 2015(6).

Fourteen percent of the Green Party's candidates in this election describe themselves as having a disability.

Ben said:

"I have been able to stand for Parliament thanks to the support of the Green Party, who have shown themselves to be an inclusive, diverse and modern political party. I am proud to represent a party that stands up for what really matters. If elected to Parliament by the people of Putney on 8 June, I look forward to doing the same".

Ends

For more information contact: press@greenparty.org.uk / 0203 691 9401

For a contact on the day call Mike Blakemore 07718 570675

Notes:

The launch takes place at Church Square, St Mary's Church Putney, Putney Bridge Approach, Putney SW15 2JQ at 10.30am on Monday 29 May.

1. The disability manifesto will be available at 10.30am at <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/green-guarantee/all-manifestos-alternative-formats.html>

2. "Deaf" with a capital 'D' is often used to refer to those people who see themselves as "culturally Deaf", members of a cultural and linguistic minority, who tend to use British Sign Language to communicate and are proud of their Deaf identity. "Deaf" with a lower-case 'd' is often used to refer

to people who see their deafness as a medical condition, and who prefer to use speech rather than sign language. They do not tend to see themselves as part of a Deaf community. See:

<https://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/your-hearing/about-deafness-and-hearing-loss/deafness/describing-deafness.aspx>

3. Ben has retinitis pigmentosa (RP), the name given to a group of inherited conditions of the retina that all lead to a gradual progressive reduction in vision. See: <http://www.rpfightingblindness.org.uk/index.php?tl=aboutrp>

4. British Sign Language (BSL) was recognised by the British government as a language in its own right on 18 March 2003. BSL is a separate language from spoken English, with its own vocabulary, grammar and syntax. It is also different from other sign languages around the world (eg American Sign Language). See:

<https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200203/cmhansrd/vo030318/wmstext/30318m02.htm>

5. The Guardian, 25 Jan 2016. See:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jan/25/government-urged-restore-fund-disabled-election-candidates>

6. Equality and Human Rights Commission response to the UN Special Rapporteur on Disabilities' inquiry into the right of disabled people to participate in political and public life, September 2015. See:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/file/4661/download?token=PIl5W6zL>

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JEREMY CORBYN SPEECH – GLASGOW – MAY 28th, 2017

Friends,

Let me first of all reflect on this week's tragic and horrific events in Manchester.

None of us here can understand why any human being would walk into a concert of young people and children and act in the grotesque and depraved way that that person did.

It was a horrific act of inexplicable violence against innocent people who

were intent only on enjoying a concert and spending time with friends and family.

But we cannot allow such acts of terror and hate to divide us.

When I stood on Albert Square at the vigil in Manchester, there was a mood of unwavering defiance.

The very act of thousands of people coming together sent a powerful message of solidarity and love. It was a profound human impulse to stand together, caring and strong. It was inspiring.

In the past few days, we have all perhaps thought a bit more about our country, our communities and our people.

What is totally clear is that goodness, decency and the best of humanity will overcome hate.

The best as well as the worst of humanity was displayed in Manchester last week.

That selfless sense of public service, decency and humanity was shown by our public service workers.

The dedication, the commitment and the sense of responsibility to take care of others of our ambulance men and women, our paramedics, our doctors and nurses and all the staff working in our NHS, our firefighters, our police and all those that keep us safe was on display last week.

The best of humanity was shown by the countless acts of kindness, the community spirit and the tremendous efforts to help people.

The taxi drivers ferrying people around with their meters off, people taking people into their homes and all the others acts of kindness showed the best of humanity.

They are the people of Manchester. But we know that attacks, such as the one at the Manchester Arena, could have happened anywhere and that the people in any city, town or village or community in Britain would have responded in the same way.

That is the solidarity that defines our United Kingdom. That is the country I meet on the streets every day; the human warmth, the basic decency and kindness. That is the country we seek to serve.

It is our compassion that defines the Britain I love. And it is compassion that the bereaved families need most of all at this time. To them I say: the whole country reaches out its arms to you and will be here for you not just this week, but in the weeks and years to come.

Love is stronger than hate and we will not allow the peddlers of hate and violence to divide our communities.

Let us stand together united and express again our love and solidarity with the people of that great city of Manchester.

As always I'm delighted to be in Scotland and to be amongst good friends. I am also delighted to be in Glasgow – a city that has so much in common with that great city of Manchester.

Both are cities known for their great football clubs (yes, including Partick Thistle!), for their culture, their music, their politics which has given so much to the Labour and trade union movement, and of course for their people who are well known for their strength, their resilience, and their humour.

Yesterday, I was at Wembley where a team in red – who were deemed the

underdogs – won.

It is also brilliant to be amongst such fantastic new and fresh representatives of our party.

Were they not just fantastic, are they not just fantastic?

The future of our party is in good hands, it's clear from our candidates here tonight and all the rest of them standing across the country that we have the talent, the enthusiasm, the commitment and the dedication to advance and achieve our positive vision for Scotland and for the whole of the country. What you have heard is young and fresh candidates and I am proud to stand here alongside them here in Glasgow tonight.

I am also proud of the campaign here in Scotland during this General Election campaign led by Kezia Dugdale and Alex Rowley. This is a campaign to transform our country and win here in Scotland.

Our party – and our manifesto for the many not the few – is standing in the finest traditions of Scottish Labour. We are the party of Keir Hardie, Jimmy Maxton and Jenny Lee. We are walking in their footsteps and I hope they would be proud of us today.

Campaign activities were suspended this week. It was important we paused campaigning to remember the victims of last week's terrible events and to reflect on the horrors experienced by people in the Manchester Arena.

It was also vital that we helped to try and soothe the shock and sadness felt in the wider Manchester area and across the rest of the country.

But my friends we must always ensure that terrorism cannot and will never ever win.

This must mean that we do not stop or compromise our values and that we do not stop or indefinitely suspend the institutions that sustain and entrench those values.

If we do that we give succour to those who wish to attack us and who want to divide us.

Our democracy is one of those great institutions.

The democratic process is a cherished expression of our society and is something that understands the importance of providing a voice for the voiceless and hope to those who want to see change and a better way.

Our movement fought for and won the right of all of the people to vote and we were at the centre of the struggle to create the democracy we have and we should never, ever compromise on our democracy.

Today's event and the way the General Election campaign restarted on Friday are an essential mark of our country's determination to defend our democracy and the unity that the terrorists have sought to attack.

Terror will never prevent us going about our daily lives nor will we allow it to derail our democratic process.

Democracy is about deciding what kind of country we want to live in.

It is right that we still do this tonight and for the remaining 10 days of this campaign.

We have just 10 days left to all get out there and speak to people about the choice at this election and about the future of our country.

So please get out there and do everything you can.

This is a historic opportunity to build the kind of society that transfers wealth and power to the many, offering hope to everyone.

Do we want a country that values our public services? That invests in our NHS, our police, our schools, colleges and universities?

Or do people want a country that manages the decline of public services and a country that does not invest enough in our most essential services and which systematically cuts resources for them?

Do we want to live in a country that values our elderly people and the service and commitment they have made to our society?

Or do we want to live in a country that provides them with enough of pension so that they can live out the rest of their lives with the dignity they deserve?

A country that provides them a social care service that is sufficiently resourced and properly cares for our older people when they need to be and where social care staff are paid what they deserve.

A country that is committed to ensuring our policing is fit for the job – with a determination to have a safer Britain in a safer world.

Or do you want to live in a country where our older people are not guaranteed a proper income and a country that does not invest sufficiently in social care and its staff and which cuts funding to our police?

I know the type of country I want live in. I know what type of country you want to live in.

I want to live in a country that invests in our police, that's why we have promised an extra 10,000 police on our streets... which will provide additional resources to the Scottish Parliament to invest in Scotland. Something that I know Scottish Labour is committed to.

And I want to live in a country that invests in our public services and a country that looks after our older people.

I want to live in a country that builds social housing again.

I want to live in a country that doesn't walk on the other side when they see people homeless in the shop doorways.

I want to live in a country that doesn't crush the hopes and dreams of our young people with debt and insecurity.

That's why we have committed to the biggest house building programme in recent memory.. . just as Scottish Labour has done with their commitment to build 60,000 homes in Scotland.

We all surely want to live in a country that values work and the wealth creators on the shop floor; not one that values the rigged system that helps the likes of Mike Ashley and Philip Green.

That's why we have committed to paying people a real living wage of £10 an hour; a policy that I know will benefit nearly half a million people in Scotland.

And that why we have vowed to ban zero-hours contracts; which will benefit nearly 60,000 Scottish workers who currently don't know how much they will earn from one week to the next. That insecurity... it's got to stop.

The truth is that at this election people are facing a fundamental choice. Only two parties can win this election. It is between the Labour Party offering hope, transformation and renewal of our society and a promise to become again a society of social justice and greater equality.

Or, a Tory party intent on managing decline of our public services, a Tory party that cuts support and services to working people.... while cutting taxes for the very rich and for the biggest businesses.

We can either tax the big corporations and the top 5 per cent a bit more, or we can continue to pay the social price – crisis in our NHS, stagnant wages and a housing crisis.

Let's be clear, that's what Conservatives offer – five more years of the many paying the social price of an economy run for the few.

The Tories tried to hide it in their frankly dishonest manifesto.

But the truth is now out.

I quote: "Britain would be subject to at least another five years of austerity.

"The figures in the Conservative manifesto are actually cuts in spending.

"And that means there's a risk to the quality of public services."

Not my words. That's the damning verdict of the Institute of Fiscal Studies – the leading think-tank on tax and spending. I'm glad the truth is out at last.

And that's the reality of what a Tory government would mean.

They won't reverse the tens of billions in tax giveaways to their wealthy friends but they will impose on working people another big dose of austerity.

I ask people in Scotland who is it to be? A Labour Party for the many not the few or a Tory Party only concerned with protecting its powerful and wealthy friends and donors.

In Scotland I know you have an added dimension in the shape of the SNP.

I have made my views absolutely clear over the past few months about how their obsession with another referendum is unwanted and unnecessary.

It is a tragedy for Scots that they have not used the full powers of this Parliament to tackle poverty and inequality.

Recent figures show that the numbers of children living in poverty have gone up 40,000 in the past year, to 260,000.

That is 260,000 young people here in Scotland right now, as we speak, disadvantaged from the start of their lives as a result of political and economic decisions made at Holyrood and Westminster.

Yet new stronger powers are available to the Scottish Government – powers the SNP demanded but refuse to use to solve the problems on their doorstep.

Our mission is first and foremost to make our country one that ends poverty and inequality and ensures that the life chances of a child in Easterhouse or Possilpark are the same as those of the children in Bearsden or the West End. Our mission is to wipe out the shame of health inequalities, in this great city and every other city across our country.

And its only Labour's manifesto, which will annually provide billions of pounds of additional resources necessary to the Scottish Parliament that can achieve that.

So I say directly to people who have recently voted Tory or SNP have a look at our manifesto, listen to our vision for our society and compare that with the records of the SNP at Holyrood and Tories at Westminster.

I am confident you will find that only Labour has a plan for an investment driven economy that will deliver for the many not the few.

I am very proud of our manifesto for lots of reasons. It is a comprehensive

plan to transform Britain for the many not the few. I am particularly proud that it recognises and seeks to develop the imagination and inspiration of all our people.

Scotland has a powerful tradition of working class writers and artists, who wrote with passion and experience as the voice of the downtrodden against the rich and powerful. That oppositional writing and poetry – from Rabbin Burns to Irvine Welsh – should inspire us all and show what we can achieve.

That's why I'm so proud that our manifesto includes an arts pupil premium so every child can learn a musical instrument. All of us have a painting, a poem, a song that can inspire others and change lives in us. We will unleash our people's creativity.

And that creativity of all our people will help build a Britain for the many not the few.

Yes, our vision challenges the notion of Scottish independence because we say that if we all stand together things can and they will change.

We are offering hope to the people of Britain who are crying out for it.

Hope for the young person wanting to go to university but worried they can't afford to go.

Hope for decent, secure and well paid work – with a real living wage, increased rights in the workplace, the repeal of the Tory Trade Union Act and a ban on zero hours contracts.

Hope for fairness in the workplace for our hard pressed public service workers whose wages have decreased year on year under the Tories – by lifting the pay cap in the public sector.

Hope that local government and the essential services it provides will once again be properly resourced – no longer will we cut local government funding cut to the bone.

Hope to those communities, far too many of whom, have been left behind after their industries were killed off – as we ensure people are paid properly and good quality jobs are created through the massive investment promised by our national investment bank – £20bn worth of investment of that in Scotland.

Hope to pensioners – as we protect the triple lock on pensions, properly resource social care and keep the Winter Fuel Allowance, and bring decency for the WASPI women.

It is Labour that offers a vision that will fundamentally renewal of our society.

Labour will renew our NHS, our schools, our social care system, our police, our fire services and our local government.

We know we all sink or swim together.

Labour knows that to achieve a safer Britain and strive for a safer world means that we all have to stand together.

When the Tories offer tax cuts to their rich friends, we say let's make life livable for the many first.

When the Tories want to balance the books on the backs of the many, we say let's tell the wealthy and big corporations to start paying the tax you owe. Actually, these are very simple choices. But choices that will make a difference to millions of people.

And it's a simple choice before the country in this election:

The Labour way of working – for the good of the entire community, or the Tory way which is perpetuating the grotesque level of inequality that already exists within our society.

We know which way works – the Labour way, for the many not the few.

This election is an enormous opportunity for us to put our vision of a Britain for the many not the few into practice.

We have 10 days to go. Just 10 days to realise our hopes and dreams.

This election is different because we, the Labour Party, are truly taking on the establishment and the whole economic consensus that saw wealth flood to the top and hold back the rest of us.

A political consensus allowed that economic consensus to thrive. That's what's known as transactional politics – offer a little bit to group A and a little bit to group B to just get enough to hold onto power.

This election is different because we are putting forward transformational politics – a big vision for a better society run for the many not the few.

The establishment has all sorts of power and tricks, but we have hundreds of thousands of members and millions of voters ready to stand up and be counted..

This is our chance. I ask you all to be strong.

And think of all those who came before us to build a better world. We should celebrate them, their knowledge, hope and strength and turn it into a 21st century vision of opportunity for the many.

We can win and build the society we all want – one that works for the many not the few. Over to you – go out and win on June 8.

News story: The AAIB has sent a team to Derbyshire

[unable to retrieve full-text content]The AAIB has sent a team to Derbyshire to investigate a light aircraft accident

10 Questions Theresa May must answer on the dementia tax

Today, we have challenged Theresa May to answer ten pressing questions on the Dementia Tax and to come clean and give the voters the facts before the election takes place.

It is simply not good enough to dodge difficult questions and proper scrutiny during the campaign over an issue that will have such a huge impact over people's lives.

Under Theresa May's proposals, many would end up paying far more for their care.

Families deserve to know now what the Dementia Tax will mean for their homes, finances and relatives.

We have set out a clear set of questions Theresa May must answer in order to come clean to the British public and address their concerns.

The Liberal Democrats will keep campaigning to scrap the Dementia Tax and ensure no-one has to worry about catastrophic costs to pay for their care.

10 Questions Theresa May must answer on Dementia Tax

1. At what level will the cap on care costs be set?

Just this morning Amber Rudd said that there would be a cap -but that she didn't know at what level it would be set. That contradicted both Theresa May and the Conservative manifesto. It's time for Theresa May to come clean – at what level will the cap on care costs be set?

2. How will it be uprated?

Will it be in line with house prices? Inflation? Some other measure? The British people deserve to know.

3. Who does the £100,000 floor apply to?

Does the £100,000 floor just apply to households? Or does it also apply to individuals?

4. Will the cap and £100,000 floor apply to care costs only?

Does the cap just apply to care costs or will it also include accommodation costs? Theresa May must come clean.

5. Will people need to pay an arrangement fee and interest?

Will people have to pay arrangement fees and interest on Deferred Payment Agreements for care costs, and if they do how will these charges be set?

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBWM) currently charges 2.25% interest and a £900 set up fee plus £300 a year (read more [here](#)).

6. Will interest fees and fee payments for care costs be included

under the cap?

Because if they aren't – vulnerable elderly people could be hit with massive fees and charges, even after they sell their home.

7. Will local councils have to pay the additional costs for this scheme or will they be fully reimbursed by the Treasury?

If councils do have to pay additional costs that'll be another drain on already stretched council budgets and cause even more cuts.

8. Will widows, widowers or dependent children be able to remain in the family home after their relative has died?

Forcing widows, widowers and dependent children to leave their homes after losing a relative – especially where they are elderly themselves would be an absolute disgrace. So would they be forced to sell the home to pay for care costs.

Theresa May must come clean on what her dementia tax will mean for the families of those affected.

9. What interest rate will be charged on a deferred payment once the beneficiary has died?

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead charge 8% if not settled within 90 days of death – will the charge be similar? Higher? Lower?

10. Will measures be put place to prevent people avoiding the Dementia Tax, for example by releasing equity or gifting a house to children or grandchildren more than seven years before their death?

The Liberal Democrats have committed in their manifesto to implementing the recommendations of the Dilnot Commission, which would mean a cap on care costs of £72,000