

No ward surgeries today – but on this Thursday!



As today is the May Day holiday at local schools, my usual ward surgeries at Harris Academy and the Mitchell Street Centre do not take place but I can be contacted at any time at home on 459378 or by e-mail at surgery@frasermacpherson.org.uk.

My surgeries resume again on Thursday at 6.15pm prompt at Blackness Primary School (yes, its polling day, but Blackness Primary is not used as a polling station so my surgery can go ahead as normal!)

Fire breaks out near holiday village in NE Beijing



A fire breaks out in northeast Beijing on Monday. [Photo: CCTV]

A fire broke out near the Xiedao Holiday Village in northeast Beijing on Monday.

According to footage filmed by eyewitnesses, there was thick smoke at the scene and “continuous thuds” could be heard.

Several fire trucks have been dispatched to the site, while people in the area are being evacuated.

[Weekly Road Report – West End Ward](#)



DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL – ROAD REPORT FOR THE WEST END

REPORT FOR WEEK COMMENCING MONDAY 1 MAY 2017

Riverside Esplanade/Riverside Drive (Tay Road Bridge off ramp to 75m along Riverside Drive) – westbound nearside lane closure for 29 weeks to facilitate V&A construction works.

SSE Glenagnes Cable Renewal – Lochee Road lane restrictions and closures on Blinshall Street, Fleuchar Street and Scott Street for 12 weeks.

Riverside Approach (Roseangle/Magdalen Yard Road to Riverside Drive) – closed from Tuesday 2 May for 2 weeks for carriageway resurfacing works.

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Labour's

Shadow Secretary of State for Housing John Healey has today pledged that under a Labour government there would be a 'consumer rights revolution' for renters, starting by introducing tougher legal minimum standards for all private rented homes.

Mr

Healey will say Labour's new minimum standards will empower renters to "call time on bad landlords" letting out dangerous or sub-standard homes and who are being let down by Conservative Ministers who have weakened key legislation.

Labour

analysis released alongside the pledge shows for the first time the cost of England's 1.3 million sub-standard private rented properties, now home to 400,000 families with children. Tenants are spending £800 million every month (£9.6 billion a year) on homes which the government classes as 'non-decent'. Around a quarter of this— some £2.3bn a year – is paid by housing benefit.

At

present, there are effectively no minimum standard for private renters, and tenants are reliant on over-stretched council environmental health teams to weed out dangerous homes rather than being able to take matters into their own hands.

Mr Healey will point out that in practice people have “fewer rights renting a family home than you do buying a fridge-freezer”. Consumer rights legislation is limited in housing so while consumers will normally get protections requiring that goods and services are ‘satisfactory quality’, and ‘fit for purpose’ with clear redress and ‘repair or replace’ provisions, there are no equivalent protections for renters.

A Labour government would consult with landlords and relevant professionals on new legal minimum standards to ensure properties are ‘fit for human habitation’ on specified criteria, for example:

- safe wiring and appliances
- freedom from serious damp and vermin infestation
- appropriate water and sewage facilities
- appropriate facilities for the preparation and cooking of food
- general good repair.

Research by Shelter in 2014 found that six in ten renters (61%) have experienced at least one of the following problems over the last 12 months: damp, mould, leaking roofs or windows, electrical hazards, animal infestations and gas leaks.

As part of Labour’s five point plan on standards announced today Mr Healey will also pledge new powers for councils to license landlords and tough fines for those who flout the rules.

John Healey MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Housing, said:

“Our homes are at the centre of our lives but at the moment renters too often don’t

have basic consumer rights that we take for granted in other areas. In practice you have fewer rights renting a family home than you do buying a fridge-freezer. As a result, too many are forced to put up with unacceptable, unfit and downright dangerous housing.

“The number of families renting from a private landlord has soared since 2010 but decisions made by Conservative Ministers have made it easier for a minority of bad landlords to game the system. Most landlords provide decent homes that tenants are happy with, but these rogue landlords are ripping off both renters and the taxpayer by making billions from rent and housing benefit letting out sub-standard homes.

“After seven years of failure the Conservatives have no plan to fix the housing crisis. The next Labour government would call time on bad landlords. We’d introduce proper minimum standards to put renters back in control, and give councils the powers they need to tackle the worst offenders.”

[The message of 1997 is as relevant today as it was then: we need people to vote for change, to vote for Labour – Gwynne](#)

Andrew Gwynne MP, Labour’s National Campaigns and Elections Chair, on the 20th anniversary of Labour’s 1997 election victory, said:

“Twenty years on from 1997, the lesson of that election is that it takes a Labour government to bring about transformative change for the many not just the few.

“In 1997, after 18 years of the Tories running down the country, Britain needed a Labour government to change working people’s lives for the better. That’s exactly what the Labour government did between 1997 and 2010.

“The achievements of that government were many. From the New Deal which helped millions in

to work, to the National Minimum Wage which made that work pay. From peace in Northern Ireland to Sure Start which made a difference to millions of children and their families. In education, school spending per pupil was doubled, thousands of schools rebuilt and 42,000 more teachers helped deliver some of the best ever school results. And for the NHS a Labour government was transformative, with the largest hospital building programme in history and 44,000 more doctors and 89,000 more nurses driving up standards and driving down waiting times.

"Now, in 2017, we again need a Labour government to rebuild and transform a country that is suffering from Tory neglect and deepening inequality. The message of 1997 is as relevant today as it was then: we need people to vote for change, to vote for Labour and for a country for the many not the few."