

Labour MPs call on the Government to lower voting age to 16

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Tomorrow, Friday 3 November, Labour MPs will be supporting Jim McMahon MP's Private Member's Bill to reduce the voting age to 16. This reform would enfranchise 1.5 million people, enabling them to participate in politics and have a say in the decisions that affect their lives and futures.

Votes at 16 has cross-party support, from the SNP, Plaid Cymru, the Liberal Democrats, the Green Party, and some senior Conservative politicians.

The Bill would also introduce a requirement on Returning Officers to ensure steps are taken to register new voters and ensure schools teach pupils about democracy and citizenship.

Jim McMahon, MP for Oldham West and Royton, said:

"The fact there is cross-party support to lower the voting age shows that the political appetite for change is there. It has been discussed in the past, but now the time has come to make it a reality.

"This is the right thing to do to strengthen our democracy, and I will be working tirelessly with other MPs and young people to make sure we take this historic step forward."

Cat Smith MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for Voter Engagement and Youth Affairs said:

"It is ridiculous that 16 year olds living in Scotland can vote in local elections, but are denied the right to vote in UK General Elections. With the Welsh Labour Government also looking to extend the franchise to young people, the UK Government must act now.

"It is vital that politicians listen to the voices of young people. That is why Labour is supporting Jim McMahon's campaign to extend the franchise

to 16 and 17 year olds.”

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