

# [Serious questions for Hancock to answer: Ashworth responds to green paper slipped out by government](#)

**Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary**, responding to the publication of the government's ill health prevention green paper, said:

"There are serious questions for Matt Hancock to answer on why he has slipped this important green paper out at this time. It looks like he is trying to bury bad news and that he buckled under pressure from Boris Johnson and the corporate lobbyists running his campaign.

"With advances in life expectancy stalling, infant mortality rates worsening and health inequalities widening, this green paper is hugely disappointing.

"Proposals to extend the sugar tax to milkshakes have been shelved again and an expected levy on tobacco firms to fund smoking cessation services appear to have been kicked into the long grass.

"The Tories have imposed £800 million worth of cuts to public local health services and there is no indication these cuts will be reversed.

"Sadly this green paper is a missed opportunity, raises disturbing questions about the role of lobbyists in watering it down, and isn't worth the paper it's written on. Only Labour will prioritise health inequalities and fully fund public health services."

Ends

## **Notes to editors**

The government uploaded its green paper *Advancing our health: prevention in the 2020s* today

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/advancing-our-health-prevention-in-the-2020s>