

## [Andy McDonald response to the publication of Transport Focus' latest National Rail Passenger Survey](#)

**Andy**

**McDonald MP, Labour's Shadow Transport Secretary**, responding to the publication of Transport Focus latest National Rail Passenger Survey, said:

"With promised upgrades delayed or cancelled and fares rising way ahead of wages, it's disappointing but not surprising that passenger satisfaction remains low despite small improvements on the previous survey.

"The results also reveal a concerning decline in passengers' sense of personal security, bringing into question the government's policy of de-staffing and de-skilling the railway.

"With fewer than half of passengers finding value for money in the price of their ticket, it's becoming more difficult for the government to justify allowing private and foreign state-owned companies to take money out of the system that should be used to improve services or hold fares down.

"It's clear that an alternative is needed for Britain's railways. It is time for our railways to be run under public ownership, in the public interest as an integrated national asset, with affordable fares for all and long-term investment in the railway network."

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## [A&E departments nationwide are under relentless pressure as a result of May's sustained underfunding of our NHS – Madders](#)

**Justin**

**Madders MP, Labour's Shadow Health Minister**, commenting on the news that NHS

officials have ordered a national review of A&E diverts amid serious safety fears, said:

“A&E departments nationwide are under relentless pressure as a result of Theresa May’s sustained underfunding of our NHS, and it is patients with urgent health needs who are paying the price.

“Simply put, it is completely unacceptable for anyone desperately needing treatment to be turned away and yet under the Tories, ambulance diverts have hit record highs.

“Patient safety must be our absolute priority and any streaming system which places patients’ lives at risk is entirely unacceptable.

“It is time Jeremy Hunt accepted our emergency care system stands on a crucial knife-edge. Without urgent and sustained investment to ease these acute strains, an unprecedented crisis this winter looks increasingly likely.”

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## [Today’s IMF report is yet another blow for the Government and its continued austerity agenda – McDonnell](#)

**John McDonnell MP, Labour’s Shadow**

**Chancellor**, responding

to the IMF downgrade of UK growth forecasts, said:

“Today’s report from the IMF is yet another blow for the Government and its continued austerity agenda that is holding our country back.

“It further reveals that this government has no real plan for Brexit and no real plan to deal with the problem of earnings not keeping up with prices, which is undermining growth and risking living standards.

“Only a Labour government will end austerity and provide the vital programme of investment to boost growth in our economy, underpinned by our Fiscal Credibility Rule, which our country desperately

needs.

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## [The Government's promise of battery technology investment is a re-announcement of funding – Long-Bailey](#)

**Rebecca**

**Long-Bailey MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**, commenting on the Government's industrial strategy announcement, said:

''Today's 'announcement' is something of a damp squib. The Government's promise of investment in battery technology is simply a re-announcement of funding promised back in April as part of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, and their record of supporting emerging green industries is abysmal.

''Labour's plans for energy market reform would see consumers' bills slashed by £120 and our industrial strategy to create one million good jobs and ensure that we find 60 per cent of our energy from renewable sources by 2030 has real teeth, backed up our £250 billion National Transformation Fund.

''This scale of vision and investment is what is needed to transform the UK economy, not a re-announcement of the same small pot of funding.'''

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## [Over seven million people will lose out by £10,000 each under Government's plans for state pension age change](#)

New analysis by the House of Commons Library has revealed that 7.6 million people will lose out by nearly £10,000 each under the Government's plans to bring forward changes to the state pension age.

The change will affect all men and women currently between the age of 39 and 47, who will be forced to work a year longer before they can access their state pension entitlement.

The Government's announcement of their plans to bring forward the state pension age last Thursday came more than two months after their legal deadline, 7 May 2017, evading debate on the issue leading up to the General Election.

The announcement was heavily criticised, as it followed evidence from the renowned expert on life expectancy, Professor Sir Michael Marmot, who just days before had described how a century-long rise in life expectancy was "pretty close to having ground to a halt." Professor Marmot pointed to 2010 as the turning point, when the Government began its austerity programme.

Just over a week ago, the Government's own advisory body, Public Health England, had published data showing significant disparities in Healthy Life Expectancy. For example, it showed how on average a man living in Nottingham would be only be expected to live in good health until the age of 57, a full eleven years earlier than the Government's newly timetabled state pension age increase to 68.

A Director of Public Health England described how the average pensioner will now have to deal with a "toxic cocktail" of ill health throughout their whole retirement, and for some years before.

**Debbie Abrahams MP, Labour's Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, said:**

"This is a disgraceful and unjustified attack on the state pension by this Government, who are asking millions of people to work longer to pay for their failing austerity plans.

"The latest research on life expectancy, published days ago, shows that there is no evidential basis for bringing the state pension age further forward.

"That's why Labour want to take a measured approach, leaving the state pension age at 66 while we review the evidence emerging around life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, considering how we can best protect those doing demanding jobs and the contributions they have already made."