

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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[John McDonnell response to Bank of England decision to raise interest rates to 0.5%](#)

John

McDonnell MP, Labour’s Shadow Chancellor, responding to the decision today by the Bank of England to raise interest rates to 0.5%, said:

“Today’s

decision by the Bank of England reflects the deep pessimism of many economists

about the underlying state of the British economy after seven years of Tory policies, with productivity forecasts also likely to be downgraded by the Office for Budget Responsibility later this month.

“The

Tories’ failure means real wages are lower today than in 2010 and still falling. The government must bring forward the investment needed to secure well-paid jobs, and follow Labour’s call for a £10/hour Real Living Wage

to end poverty pay.”

[Amber Rudd admits crime is rising but police numbers are still being cut – Diane Abbott](#)

Diane Abbott MP, Labour’s Shadow Home Secretary, speaking today at the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners’ and National Police Chiefs’ Council’s Partnership Summit 2017, said:

“The Tories have been in denial about rising crime, but Amber Rudd yesterday admitted there is a genuine increase in violent crimes.

“Crime is up, yet the Tories continue to cut police numbers, which are now at

a 35-year low. Instead of listening to police chiefs and crime commissioners, the Tories continue to insist that the police are not over-stretched. The reality is very different. Serious crime is rising, police numbers are falling, and the arrest rate is down.

“Labour in government will increase police numbers by 10,000. We will begin to address the real shortfall in resources. The Tories will continue with their internal crises. Labour will tackle the real problems facing ordinary people.”

[Today's statistics about families affected by the Tories' benefit cap are deeply concerning – Debbie Abrahams](#)

Debbie Abrahams MP, Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary,

commenting on the benefit cap statistics released by the Department for Work and Pensions today, said:

“It is deeply concerning that nearly 70,000 families are now being affected by the Tories' benefit cap.

“Seven in every ten of those are single parent families, struggling to give their children the best life chances in the face of falling real wages, the spiralling cost of essentials and inflexible, low quality childcare.

“The courts recently ruled that a benefit cap was discriminatory and unlawful for nearly 30,000 families with children under two. Often these are women fleeing domestic violence.

“Labour has stood against the reduction of the benefit cap. We will transform the social security system so that, like the NHS, it is there for us all in our time of need.”

Today's figures expose the Government's hollow promises on nurse recruitment – Jonathan Ashworth

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, commenting on the latest Nursing and Midwifery Council data showing a further fall in numbers on their register, said:

"The new figures from the NMC expose the Government's hollow promises on nurse recruitment. Far from delivering the staff needed to keep patients on wards safe, nurse numbers are now in fact falling in our NHS. It's staggering that numbers are falling when all the evidence shows we need more nurses in the NHS, not less.

"The truth is that the Government has totally failed in its planning of the NHS workforce. The disastrous pay cap has pushed staff to the brink and the end of bursaries has led to a fall in places on nursing degrees. Now Theresa May's chaotic approach to Brexit is directly impacting staffing levels in the NHS.

"With winter coming it is essential the NHS can get enough staff in place to deliver safe services for patients. The Government needs to get a grip and come up with a sustainable long term plan for the NHS which deals with the staffing crisis and gives the NHS the funding it needs."