

# Cat Smith comments on the Electoral Commission's 2017 UK Parliamentary General Election report

**Cat Smith MP, Labour's Shadow**

**Minister for Voter Engagement and Youth Affairs**, commenting on the Electoral Commission report on the 2017 UK Parliamentary General Election, said:

"We welcome the Electoral Commission's report which shows that 46.8 million people were registered to vote at the 2017 UK General Election, making it the largest electorate for a UK-wide poll.

"To build a healthy democracy we need active participation of all citizens, which is why the Labour Party delivered a ground-breaking digital campaign which sought to maximise the number of young people to register to vote during the election period. In contrast, the Conservative party assumed that young people were apathetic to party politics. They made no effort to encourage voter registration, or to put forward policies that would offer real opportunities to young people.

"We agree with a number of the key recommendations put forward by the Electoral Commission. Double voting is a serious crime and it is vital that the police have the resources they need to bring about prosecution. However, we urge caution when looking at measures to tackle this issue – a blanket ban on being registered at two addresses would exclude those who for reasons of work or study need to be registered in two places. This cannot be an attempt to make it harder for young people and students to register to vote.

"During the General Election, the Labour Party put forward an inclusive, optimistic and transformative manifesto, which we will continue to strengthen and communicate to voters, in order to build a Britain that truly works for the many not the few."

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# The Government has failed to deliver the 10,000 extra nursing places they promised

**Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow**

**Health Secretary**, responding to reports in Nursing Times that universities are reducing the size of their nursing courses in the wake of the removal of bursaries in England, said:

"The Government's decision to remove the bursaries for health degrees is a terrible misjudgment. They have failed to deliver the extra 10,000 nursing places they promised and in fact some universities are now planning to offer fewer places.

"Applications for nursing degrees have fallen by 23% this year and now universities say they have not yet received enough responses from prospective students to fill the number of training places they are offering.

"The Government has created a crisis in the nursing workforce which is causing chaos for patients. They should urgently revisit their decision to charge fees for health degrees before it is too late."

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# Richard Burgon congratulates Sir Ian Burnett on his appointment as Lord Chief Justice

**Richard Burgon MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Justice**, commenting on the appointment of Sir Ian Burnett as the new Lord Chief Justice, said:

"I congratulate Sir Ian Burnett on his appointment as Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales from October 2017.

"One of the Lord Chief Justice's key responsibilities is representing the views of the judiciary to Parliament and the government.

"I look forward to working with Lord Justice Burnett in upholding the

independence of the judiciary, which is a cornerstone of our legal system.”

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## [The Government urgently needs a new approach to tackling acid attacks – Diane Abbott](#)

**Diane Abbott MP, Labour’s Shadow Home Secretary**, responding to the acid attacks that took place across London yesterday evening, said:

“The recent spate of acid attacks have shocked the nation, but sadly they are nothing new. With a steady rise in attacks since 2010 and a steep increase of 70 per cent from 2015 to 2016, it is clear that the Government urgently needs a new approach to tackling this heinous crime.

“Just like knives and guns, acid is being used in murders, robberies and rapes. The problem is the weapon of choice is often a common household product. With very few prosecutions it is clear that we do not have the tools necessary to investigate and prevent these attacks.

“While the Tories arrogantly insist that they have protected the police budget, the reality is they have cut numbers by over 20,000, leaving our forces overstretched as they work tirelessly to keep the public and our communities safe.”

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## [Warm words won’t tackle the drugs crisis – Diane Abbott](#)

**Diane Abbott MP, Labour’s Shadow Home Secretary**, responding to the launch of the Government’s new drugs strategy, said:

“Rising

drug-related fatalities, drug crime and a cocktail of new drugs means that a new effective strategy is overdue. But this isn't it.

"Commitments

to treat addiction and tackle the social ills that accompany it are meaningless

from a Government which has cut drug treatment services and centres. There is no new money now.

"At

the same time, this Tory Government expects law enforcement agencies to deal with multiple new drugs and sources of supply, but has spent seven years slashing funding to the police and border force with further cuts in the pipeline.

"Warm

words won't tackle the drugs crisis. Resources are needed, and mustn't be diverted from other hard-pressed budgets. Labour in government will tackle the

drugs crisis and review the priorities to ensure they are appropriate."