

# Angela Rayner speech to Labour Party Conference

**Angela Rayner MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Education**, speaking at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton today, said:

**\*\*\*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY\*\*\***

Conference, last year I said it was a surprise, but a great privilege, to stand before you as Shadow Secretary of State for Education. And what a year it has been.

Theresa May started it by warning of a coalition of chaos. Now she leads it. And her education ministers have spent the last few months ripping up their own Manifesto page by page.

They wanted to open new grammar schools. But they can't. They said they'd build 140 free schools. They couldn't. They pledged the healthy pupils fund would not fall below £400 million. Now it will.

They promised they'd provide free school breakfasts. But they won't.

When we beat them on tuition fees, they refused to accept it. Instead they will just stop turning up for votes. They've gone from running the place to running away from the place.

In fact, I went through their Manifesto line by line. There are more education policies that they are reviewing or abandoning than they are actually implementing.

They're binning their Manifesto; we are building on ours.

The next Labour Government will create a National Education Service, a cradle-to-grave system supporting everyone throughout their lives. It would start in the early years, where we know it has the most impact in changing people's lives – just like my life was changed by a Labour Government.

When I became pregnant at sixteen, it was easy to think that the direction of my life, and that of my young son, was already set. My mum had a difficult life, and so did I, and it looked like my son would simply have the same.

Instead, the last Labour Government,

through support of my local Sure Start centre, transformed my son's childhood, and made sure that his life would not have to be as hard as mine had been. So when I say that politics changes lives, I say it as someone whose own life was changed.

Yet those services are being lost across the country. We revealed today that since 2012, £437 million pounds has been cut from Sure Start – nearly half of their funding. That means more children and families with less control over their lives.

So I am proud to say that we will give £500 million a year directly to Sure Start, reversing those cuts in full. Because to give every child a fair chance to succeed, we need to give them the best possible start in life.

For far too many that simply isn't happening. The Tories promised free childcare to the children of working parents. They promised over 600,000 places. But they created less than a quarter of them. The most disadvantaged aren't even eligible and costs are rising more than twice as fast as wages.

Today, we are publishing a report setting out the alternative. Free, high-quality early education, universally available for every 2-4 year old, and extra affordable care for every family, saving them thousands of pounds a year. So our children will be ready for school. And when children arrive, they won't be let down for a lack of resources there either.

The Government's latest U-turn was on their so-called fair funding formula two weeks ago. Thanks to our pressure, and the great campaign run by parents and teachers, they have abandoned cash cuts to schools.

But the truth is, there is no new money – every penny has been found by cutting other education spending. And they still won't meet their promise that funding will go up in real terms over five years. This means the continuation of real terms funding cuts to 88% of schools, hitting the most disadvantaged areas hard.

A Labour Government would meet that promise instead: a fairer funding formula, but genuinely fair and properly funded. And we will remember the most important resource: people.

Learning needs teaching. Teachers would be at the heart of the National Education Service. And we will pay them properly to do it. That is why we will bring an end to the public sector pay cap. And teaching assistants and support staff too. Many have lost so much that they are on the minimum wage. We will bring back national standards for them too. They look after our children. We should look after them.

As well as giving our schools the resources they need, we must ensure that they give every child the support they need. Because all our pupils deserve a good quality of life. So, I am proud to say that as your Secretary of State, I will allocate £10m from our departmental budget to end the scandal of period poverty in our schools.

Councils are required to find a school for every child. We will give them the resources to meet that responsibility. Unlike the Tories, we will help successful state schools expand and ensure that every child gets a school place. So we will invest £8bn pounds in new school buildings, where they are needed. And we won't neglect existing schools to do it.

We will provide the full £13bn pounds needed for the existing school estate. Instead of wasting millions of pounds on an inefficient free schools programme, we will provide funding to ensure our schools are safe – that flammable cladding can be removed, sprinklers installed and asbestos cleared.

And the National Education Service won't stop at eighteen, or sixteen. Further education isn't just for those who 'didn't get the chance' to go to university; it serves the majority of young people. They too deserve a world-class education.

Instead, the Tories are happy to manage decline. I will only be happy when we manage success. So we will invest a billion pounds into a further education service to deliver T-levels that are a true gold standard.

The Tories keep talking about how they want to help young people. Reducing fees.

Capping interest rates. Raising repayment thresholds. I've got a suggestion for them. Stop talking about it, and get on with it.

But our National Education Service is not just for young people either. That is personal to me too. At sixteen I was out of school and looking for work, but without qualifications to offer. I supported myself and my son as a care worker, looking after the elderly and disabled in their homes. Low qualifications meant low wages. No skills meant no security.

As a trade unionist with Unison, I could change that. Not just for myself, but for the carers I worked with, and the people we cared for. Workplace education meant we had the chance to learn more and earn more. Other people need that chance. So, our National Education Service will be lifelong, providing for people at every stage of their life.

That is our National Education Service. Not just another structure. Not another new sign on the school gate.

A promise, from a Labour Government, to the British people and British businesses.

That we believe in all of them, in their talent and their potential, in all they give to our country, and that we will never limit their aspiration or their ability to succeed. It will set out the education that people can expect throughout their lives. The contribution that society makes to them and that they can make to society.

Today, we outline the principles of that National Education Service in a draft charter, starting a conversation on how we continue to build it moving forward. And I look forward to that conversation, to visiting schools, colleges, and universities, to talking to pupils, parents, teachers, and businesses, so we can truly build a National Education Service for the many, and not just the few.

Conference, Education informs. It inspires. And it empowers. Because knowledge is power. I know that from my own life. We must ensure that power becomes the right of every person, whatever the circumstances of their birth.

That means giving opportunity to all, with a guarantee of lifelong learning, whenever they need it. It means giving power back to our communities, ensuring that every school in receipt of public money is genuinely, democratically accountable to the people it serves.

The Labour Party was founded to ensure that the workers earned the full fruit of their labour. Well, the sum of

human knowledge is the fruit of thousands of years of human labour. The discoveries of maths and science; the great works of literature and art; the arc of human and natural history itself; and so much more that there is to learn. All of it should be our common inheritance. Because knowledge belongs to the many, not the few.

This is our historic purpose as a movement. Not just to be a voice for the voiceless.

But to give them a voice of their own. That is the challenge we face. And it is what we will do, together.

We have got the Government running. Now let's get running the Government.

Thank you.

---

## [Rebecca Long-Bailey speech to Labour Party Conference](#)

**Rebecca Long-Bailey MP, Shadow Secretary for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**, speaking at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton today, said:

**\*\*\*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY\*\*\***

Conference,  
when I was little, my dad would tell me stories of his job in Salford, unloading oil tankers. How we were known as "the workshop of the world". Life was good for us back then. My dad's work was unskilled, but it paid well. My parents even managed to get a mortgage for their own little house.

And  
from poverty-plagued childhoods, which made the film Angela's Ashes look like an advert for a luxury minibreak, they felt proud of their achievement! And that was true of so many working class people right across Britain, for the first time in history they were truly being offered the chance to aspire!

But  
under Thatcher industries such as my father's were put into what is so callously called 'managed decline'. It meant factories shutting their doors, firms moving abroad or simply closing down, lower wages for those who could still find work, and cuts to benefits for those who couldn't.

We

now have the most regionally imbalanced economy in Europe. 40% of our economic output comes from London and the South East alone. And despite the pretence that we have 'full employment', we know the figures hide a worrying truth:

an

insecure, low paid and 'casualised' workforce.

When

the Prime Minister called the general election in spring, we were 20 points behind in the polls. The seven weeks that followed saw the biggest narrowing of the polls in British electoral history.

There

were many things that contributed to that turnaround. The passion, integrity and strength of our leader, Jeremy Corbyn. The hard work of the Shadow Cabinet, not least my brilliant team Chi Onwurah, Alan Whitehead, Barry Gardiner, Bill Esterson, Jack Dromey, Gill Furniss and Dan Carden. The hard-work and dedication of every single person in this hall and in our movement.

But

there were other key factors at play. A country fed up with the dogmas of political and economic neglect that, for so many, had only meant so much hardship. And a Manifesto that showed them that it didn't have to be this way. When we promised an industrial strategy to end the economy's reliance on the City of London. To properly fund our public services by making the top 5% pay their fair share. And to invest in our energy, transport and digital infrastructure to make it fit for the 21st Century

When

we promised to take the radical action needed to tackle climate change,

and

ensure that 60% of our energy comes from low carbon or renewable sources by 2030. To support projects like Swansea tidal lagoon and Moorside nuclear plant.

When

we promised to introduce a £10 living wage. And to level the playing field between small and big business. We offered a vision of hope. And we offered transformation! Because we know what lies ahead.

Conference,

we are standing on the precipice of the fourth industrial revolution,

a

pace of technological and digital change so immense it will leave you feeling dizzy.

It  
will transform industry, it will transform our economy. And it has the  
potential to transform the quality of life of every single person in Britain.

But  
it will only do this if a Labour Government is holding the reins.

Now  
I know it's hard to believe but I was 38 the other day. Just 20 years ago, on  
my 18th birthday, you had to dial up the internet, you checked your lottery  
numbers on teletext, my first mobile only received ten text messages, and you  
taped things off the telly with a cassette, which if, like in our house, you  
were at the cutting edge of 1990'S interior design, you kept them in those  
plastic boxes designed to look like books.

But  
people in their teens today have no idea what most of those things are.

And  
the pace of change we have seen in the last 20 years will pale in comparison  
to  
the next 20. Over the last few centuries, we have gradually learnt how to  
transfer more and more human skills to machines. With current technological  
breakthroughs, we are, for the first time, designing machines that do  
cognitive  
and non-routine work.

Machines  
that think!

But,  
with some estimates suggesting that half of all jobs could be lost to  
automation,

and  
that few businesses are ready to harness change, it also brings the threat of  
rising poverty and inequality. There is no doubt about what the digital age  
will look like under the Tories: monopoly profits for the few, and increased  
exploitation for the many.

Only  
Labour will ensure that workers and businesses are equipped to enjoy the  
prosperity this changing economy can bring.

We'll  
restore the rights of workers – rolling out sectoral collective bargaining  
and  
guaranteeing unions access to the workplace – to ensure that new technology  
is  
not just an excuse for disgraced old employment practices. Because there is  
nothing cutting edge about

hire-and-fire, casual contracts.

We'll

create the conditions for business to make those really 'transformative' discoveries which can change all our lives for the better, with an industrial agenda that is so transformational, it will eclipse the new deal set out by Franklin D Roosevelt in the history books.

We'll

bring investment in research and development in line with other major economies  
and create national missions to deal with the big issues of our time

And

our National Education Service will allow every single person in this country to obtain the skills they need to thrive in a modern economy and ensure real diversity in our workplaces.

But

it's not enough for Britain to innovate. We'll put Britain at the forefront of industrial manufacturing, so that the ideas conceived in Britain are manufactured and delivered here in Britain. 'Made in Britain' will not just be an idealistic vision of times gone by, it will be a source of national pride for future generations.

And

finally, we'll ensure that workers themselves can have a stake in our industrial journey alongside business.

Imagine

if the technology which allows us to hail a taxi or order a takeaway via an app was shared by those who rely on it for work. They would have the power to agree their own terms and conditions and rates of pay, with the profits shared among them or re-invested for the future.

That's

why we are today launching a Report on Alternative Models of Ownership.

To

start asking fundamental questions about how we achieve real diversity of business in the digital age, and how to ensure that it's enormous potential benefits serve the many, not the few.

Now

conference, the fourth industrial revolution is here! A time of profound economic and technological change. The Tories have had their chance.



We've seen how they deal with industrial and technological change. And they have failed.

We either seize the possibilities it can bring us, technological advancement, living standards and leisure time, that even Harold Wilson in the white heat of technology couldn't have dreamed of! Or we let the Tories consign our heritage as a proud industrial nation to the dustbin of history.

As Klaus Schwab the Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum once said:

"There has never been a time of greater promise, or greater peril."

But we are ready! Together we will harness the fruits of the extraordinary changes that are coming. A society with more potential than any before, but built for the many, not the few. Conference, this is our time now!

---

## [Alex Rowley MSP speech to the Labour Party Conference](#)

**Alex Rowley**  
**MSP, interim Leader of Scottish Labour Party**, speaking at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton today, said:

**\*\*\*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY\*\*\***

Chair, Conference, Thank you for that welcome.

This week we gather here in Brighton, united, strong and determined. Determined to expose how this Tory Government is failing working people. Strengthened by the size of our movement. And united around our leader. The person who will be Labour's next Prime Minister – Jeremy Corbyn.

Conference, I was elected to the Scottish Parliament in Cowdenbeath in 2014. And since then I've experienced

great highs and lows. There is no doubt that we have seen tough times in Scotland. But we are back on track. And I want to pay tribute to the woman that saw us through after our defeat in 2015. Kezia Dugdale.

Friends, Kez stood up for the Scottish Labour Party in the toughest of circumstances. Both as Deputy Leader and Leader of our Party. Conference, let us send her our thanks today. The work that Kez did, and the result that she and Jeremy delivered alongside our members in June, shows that the Labour Party is once again connecting with communities across Scotland.

This year, we won back constituencies from the SNP that people thought were lost for generations. Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill, Rutherglen and Hamilton West, Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath, Glasgow North East, East Lothian, Midlothian, along with Edinburgh South – all now represented by Scottish Labour MPs.

They will ensure Scotland's voice is heard in Westminster.

And let's welcome each of our new MPs to Conference today, led by our Shadow Scottish Secretary, Lesley Laird.

I know we have asked so much of you – our members, activists and supporters – over the last few years. But we are so close in so many constituencies. And we should set our sights high. Being a strong opposition should never be enough. Our aim must be to win the next election in Scotland. Because let me be absolutely clear. Scotland can make that difference at the next election.

The choice will be between a Labour Government that will tackle poverty, increase family incomes and raise the standards for all. Or more decline, decay and drift with a Tory Government.

Conference, it's not the SNP who can deliver an end to the Tories. It's the Scottish Labour Party.

Friends, we will win because we will have the best candidates, the better ideas and the bigger vision. That's what our Manifesto this year gave us. A plan for the many, not the few.

In England, people saw straight through Theresa May's hollow words. Because this is what a 'strong and

stable' status quo means to working people across this country:

Cuts to public services, to schools and hospitals, pursued by the Tories in England, but also for ten years by the SNP in Scotland;

The loss of jobs that provided the backbone of communities and their replacement with low pay and insecure work;

And the disgrace of the people, who suffered because of austerity, being asked time and again to pay the price for it.

Conference, this is an affront to every decent hardworking person in our country. Scotland is a rich country. There's no reason why children need to go hungry, why foodbanks should be appearing in our communities or why men and women should be forced to spend their nights sleeping on the streets.

Conference, austerity is a choice, and these are its consequences. And this is what the Labour Party will stand against now and always.

Conference, changing our country has to start with changing the Government.

The election result in June has energised us and shown that the chance to serve again in Government – in Westminster and Holyrood – is within our reach.

Labour's Manifesto showed what we will do if we get there. It will be a Government for the many, not the few. We'll take industries that used to belong to every one back into public ownership, and put people – not profits – first. We will oppose a Tory right wing hard Brexit. We want a jobs first Brexit that keeps our access to the single market. And, over the next year, under a new leader in Scotland, we will start to lay out what change with Labour would mean.

Our party has not been in Government in Scotland for ten years, and that has to change. Whenever the SNP leave Government, they will leave having divided our country. Our first job will be to bring our nation together again. And, just as Labour has always done, we will bring people together around a vision of the future.

In 1945, Labour under Clement Attlee gave us the vision of the NHS and the Welfare State. Through the 40s

and

50s, Tom Johnstone brought power to rural Scotland and pioneered hydro-electricity. In the 1960s, Harold Wilson saw a future powered by the White Heat of Technology. And in this century, Gordon Brown, a son of Fife church minister and a son of Scotland, ended the scandal of pensioner poverty, made Keir Hardie's vision of a minimum wage a reality, and lifted a million children out of poverty.

Conference, that's the difference a Labour Government makes. And that's why we will never stop fighting for the Labour Government this country needs.

Friends, Labour's mission was about building a lasting legacy and giving people the opportunities they needed to succeed. Today, we have that vision in Scotland again.

We need to set out a plan for our major industries – for oil and gas, for shipbuilding, for finance, food and drink. And we also need to attract the jobs of the future – in advanced manufacturing, in renewable energy and in science and technology. We need to provide this next generation of Scots with better opportunities than the last, by investing in education, training and skills. And we need to renew our commitment to the public services that look after us from cradle to grave – the welfare state and the NHS.

That means being honest about what we have to do to pay for these services and, as Labour, making the argument that our duties to each other mean that we can afford to pay a little more.

Not like the Tories in Scotland, or like the SNP Government that only has one tax policy. A tax cut for the airlines that will benefit the richest the most.

The SNP cannot have a serious debate on tax if its only policy kicks off a race to the bottom against a UK Tory Government, propped up by the DUP, who are desperate to see that tax abolished. The SNP face a choice – work with Labour to use the tax powers to protect public services – or give Philip Hammond and Arlene Foster the excuse they are looking for to give the richest yet another bonus.

Conference, the Scottish Parliament's new powers do not end with tax. As powers over the welfare state come into force, we need to think about how we can use them to show the

kind of society we want to build. And that is why I renew my calls today for the Scottish Government to use their new powers to add £5 to Child Benefit – a move that would lift tens of thousands of children out of poverty.

This would send a clear signal that in Scotland we are willing to pay so that every child can get the best start in life. Conference, we can afford this change and we should make it, for this generation and generations to come.

Conference, if we are to build a better society, we also need to think about how we run our country. Scotland has been divided for too long by the question of independence. And, now the UK is divided by Brexit. Our nation faces the greatest political change of our lifetime.

When power returns from the EU, maintaining the status quo should not be an option. Because how we run our country isn't just an abstract discussion for politicians and academics. It's about how we enable working people across our country to have power as close to their hands as possible. That is why I am proud that Scottish Labour supports federalism, and why I believe this points the way for the future of our country.

With the Tories and the SNP, we have two Governments with no interest in reforming how the UK works, and making it work better.

That is why it must fall to the Labour Party. And why I renew my call today for a Constitutional Convention, convened by the Labour Party, to determine how our country can be renewed for the future. And, Conference let me be very clear. We will resist at every turn the Tory Brexit power grab.

In Government, Labour will defend Donald Dewar's devolution settlement – Labour's devolution settlement – so that the powers of the Scottish Parliament are never diminished. For many who voted yes in Scotland, Jeremy has provided them with real hope of an alternative. He has shown that change is possible inside the UK. That should now be matched by a commitment from Labour for a Constitutional Convention and a federal solution for the United Kingdom, with Scotland as a full and equal partner.

Conference, the challenge ahead of us now is straightforward. To restore Labour to Government in Scotland and across the UK. Whoever wins our leadership election in Scotland will be

our  
candidate for First Minister and we will all get behind them to make that  
happen.

And in Jeremy, we have a  
leader who is a Prime Minister in waiting. So let us leave this Conference  
later this week, united, determined and strong. Let's win the next election  
for  
working people. Let's win to stand against poverty and inequality.

Conference, let's win for  
Labour.

---

## Sadiq Khan speech to Labour Party Conference

**Sadiq Khan, Mayor of  
London**, speaking at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton today, said:

**\*\*\*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY\*\*\***

Conference, it's great to be back in Labour Brighton. And it's great to see  
our Labour Party so fired up under Jeremy Corbyn.  
Labour confounded all expectations at the  
general election this year.

Let's be clear, Theresa May called this snap  
election to try and wipe us out. And boy  
did she fail.

It was inspiring to see millions of people vote  
for the first time – especially so many young people. And it was inspiring to  
see so many people who used to  
vote for our Party return home to Labour.

We made huge progress in the general election  
and the credit for that goes to one person – the leader of our party – Jeremy  
Corbyn.

He mobilised our movement. He motivated our activists and reached voters we  
hadn't reached before. Thanks to the hard  
work of Labour members and trade unionists, London elected four fantastic new  
Labour MPs.

We now have a Labour Member of Parliament  
representing Battersea, Enfield Southgate, Croydon Central, and, yes, Labour

Kensington. Let's hear it for our Labour gains in London. Our new MPs: Marsha de Cordova; Bambos Charalambous; Sarah Jones and Emma Dent Coad.

And by the way – hasn't Emma been an amazing advocate for the neglected residents affected by the terrible Grenfell fire?

As a united Labour family we're on the march. This year's election came during an unbelievably difficult time for London, our capital, the city I love so much. It's been one of the darkest times in London's recent history. We've been through too much suffering, too much horror, and too much loss. The terrorist attack on Westminster – the heart of our democracy. The attack on innocent people, enjoying a night out in London Bridge and Borough Market. The horrific fire at Grenfell Tower. The attack on innocent people near Finsbury Park Mosque during Ramadan. And the attack at Parsons Green station on Londoners, as they travelled into work and school.

Nobody expects such tragedy. And no one should tolerate it. We prepare and practice for the worst, but we hope and pray it will never happen. Keeping Londoners safe is my top priority. And in all honesty, it's hard – by far the hardest part of my job. It really does keep me awake at night.

Fearing the call in the early hours that came too often this summer, to say the worst had happened. More innocent Londoners, who have experienced unimaginable horrors to help and console. More funerals to attend of those who have been killed. And always, always more to do to keep Londoners safe.

But Conference – there are some people who spend their entire lives trying to stop these terrible events and who lead our response when they happen. Whose job it is to put themselves in harm's way, every day, to try to keep the rest of us safe. And who do it with dedication, professionalism and heroism.

Conference, please stand and join me to show your appreciation to our amazing emergency services. Thanks to our police officers, community support officers and staff. Thanks to our firefighters and control room operators. Thanks to our frontline NHS staff, and all who support them – our paramedics, nurses, doctors and health workers. And thanks to our transport staff who are so often on the front line.

On behalf of all Londoners – and the entire Labour Party – thank you for everything you do. You truly are heroes.

In the darkness of this year the bravery of our emergency services has been a beacon of hope. We have witnessed incredible courage and self-sacrifice. Like PC Keith Palmer, who was tragically killed in the line of duty while protecting Parliament. Although he was unarmed, he didn't hesitate before confronting the attacker. Rarely has a St George's medal for bravery been so deserved. And our thoughts and prayers will always remain with his family and friends.

Or take Colleen Anderson, a junior doctor at St Thomas' Hospital. When she saw the attack from the hospital window, she rushed across the river to treat people lying injured in the road.

Or Wayne Marques, the British Transport Police officer who, single-handedly, took on three armed attackers at London Bridge. Despite suffering terrible wounds, he fought them off until help arrived.

Or the hundreds of firefighters, who went far above the call of duty to save lives during the fire at Grenfell Tower. Who took extraordinary risks with their own safety.

And I want to say a special thank you to Dany Cotton – our London Fire Commissioner. Dany led the rescue operation at Grenfell Tower – going into the building and taking those risks alongside our firefighters. I want to thank Dany also for the honesty with which she talked about those awful scenes – and for being so open about receiving counselling after the fire. She's encouraged many of our emergency responders and ordinary Londoners to do the same.

And we should thank the brave Transport for London staff, who calmly helped during the attack at Parsons Green station – evacuating the train and leading people to safety – regardless of the risk to themselves.

There's no doubt that we face a growing threat. Experts say that the number of terrorist attacks this year is not a spike, but a long-term shift.

And crime is on the rise again. The types of crime we see are more complicated and harder to tackle. Violent crime is rising even faster – with too many killed or maimed as a result of knife crime or acid attacks. And ever more young people are



being groomed and radicalised by evil extremists – whether here or abroad.

But Conference it doesn't have to be this way. This all feels very familiar. A weak and divided Tory Government, refusing to face up to the challenges ahead. Bickering and infighting over Europe, putting our jobs and economy at risk. Chronic underinvestment in public services causing a crisis in our schools and hospitals. And crime on the rise.

But Conference, this isn't the 1990s. This is now. It's like Back to the Future, but it isn't funny. Tory cuts to our emergency services have made it harder to keep us safe. A billion pounds cut from the Met Police – a billion pounds less for London's policing budget.

The result? Fewer police officers on our streets. Police stations closed. And neighbourhood policing under attack. Even police counter-terrorism funding has been cut in real terms. The same goes for our fire service. Fewer fire engines. Fewer fire stations. And fewer fire fighters.

The same story is true in our National Health Service, our councils, our transport network and in every one of our public services.

Conference – we simply can't go on like this. The brave men and women of our emergency services can't do their job when the Tories are cutting their funding every year.

It must stop. The Government must give our emergency services the real-terms increase in funding that they desperately need – and right now.

You know, the Tories used to describe themselves as the party of law and order. Well that sounds like a bad joke today. And frankly, as a former Home Secretary, Theresa May should be utterly ashamed of her record.

Labour is the only Party with a plan to tackle rising crime. Labour is the only Party standing behind the men and women of our emergency services. And Labour is the only Party already making a real difference in towns and cities across the UK.

A Labour Government will finally put an end to years of Tory cuts to our emergency services. And a Labour Government, led by

Jeremy Corbyn, will finally give our emergency services the proper pay rise they so desperately deserve. Not the insulting offer made by the Tories.

It's Labour – in London, Manchester, Liverpool and Wales – that has a real plan to tackle violent crime – like gun crime, knife crime and acid attacks. It's Labour that's finally making social integration and community cohesion a priority so we can put a stop to the grooming and radicalisation of our young people.

It's Labour that's finally made hate crime and violence against women and girls a top priority for the police. And it's Labour that's restoring community trust in our police, and making our emergency services more reflective of the communities they serve.

You know it made me so proud to be the Labour Mayor when Cressida Dick was appointed as the first woman Met Commissioner in 188 years. And when Dany Cotton was appointed as the first woman Fire Commissioner in the brigade's history.

And you know what? They were both appointed on merit as the best people for the job.

Conference, despite the challenges we've faced over the past year – I'm optimistic, positive and hopeful about our future. I'm so proud to call myself British and to call myself a Londoner. I'm confident that both London and the UK have bright futures ahead. That we can become a more prosperous, safe and equal country.

And, Conference, I'm optimistic about Labour's future too. Optimistic that we'll build on the success of Labour in power in London, Manchester, Liverpool and Wales. That we'll make more progress in the local elections next year. That we'll make a huge difference to the lives of millions. That we can build a fairer Britain. A more prosperous Britain. A safer Britain.

And that Labour under Jeremy Corbyn will win the next general election.

Thank you.

---

# Debbie Abrahams speech to Labour Party Conference

**Debbie Abrahams MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions**, speaking at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton today, said:

**\*\*\*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY\*\*\***

It is, once again, an honour to be speaking to you as Labour's Work and Pensions Secretary. Who would have thought that after leaving school at 15 with just 3 'O' levels I would be standing here today?

The passion I feel about building a fairer society has been with me for as long as I can remember. For more than 20 years, I worked to tackle inequalities in communities and beyond. And that's what drove me into politics. The more you get into what determines inequality, the more you realise that inequality is not inevitable. It's constructed.

The type of society we have, the tolerance and even the trust we feel towards one another, reflects how fairly we divide up our collective wealth. Ultimately these come down to political choices and leadership.

And people are seeing this now. They are seeing the stark contrast between Theresa May's Tories, protecting an increasingly wealthy elite, and Labour, under Jeremy Corbyn, whose entire political life has been dedicated to the many, not the few. His commitment is not a sound bite or a whim, it is who he is and has always been.

Over the past seven years, we have seen the effects of the Tories' ideologically-driven austerity policies. A record 7.4m working people living in poverty. Falling real wages, which remain lower than they were in 2008. An unprecedented rise in foodbank use, rough sleeping doubling, and more than 120,000 children and their families without a home. A typical UK worker would take 160 years to earn the average annual amount handed to a FTSE 100 boss. And for the first time in decades we are seeing life expectancy falling.

Conference, there can be nothing more unjust than knowing how long we live is determined by inequality in income, wealth and social position. It doesn't have to be this way. We are

the fifth richest country in the world. As our Manifesto set out, the next Labour Government, will make different choices, fairer choices. For the many, not the few!

These widening inequalities have stifled growth, too. Differences in growth across the UK have led to inequalities in our labour markets as well. But the Tories' social security policies have failed to respond to this changing world of work, where workers are often stuck in an endless 'low pay, no pay' cycle.

One of my constituents, a single mum who works as a nurse in a local hospital, came to see me at one of my surgeries in Oldham recently. In the process of transferring on to Universal Credit from tax credit,s she had to wait more than 6 weeks for a payment, as over 1 in 4 people do. This delay and a number other administrative issues meant that she couldn't pay all of her rent. When she came to see me, she had just been served an eviction notice.

In another case, Kellie, who's here today, is worried that she will have a similar experience when UC is rolled out in Wythenshawe. Although she's been on tax credits, she is off work from her cleaning job at Manchester airport, waiting for an operation. Being on statutory sick pay has eaten into her savings and she's now in rent arrears. She said if she had to wait at least six weeks to receive her UC payment, she's sure her family would end up being homeless.

Conference, on behalf of these women, and the six and half million families still to move on to Universal Credit, I'm calling on the Prime Minister to halt next month's UC roll out while we work to fix these issues.

Our social security system is also failing sick and disabled people. At last year's Conference I played the trailer from 'I, Daniel Blake', Ken Loach's iconic film about a man recovering from a heart attack, but found fit for work and battling for help from the Department for Work and Pensions.

Its impact in changing attitudes about social security claimants from the Tories' shirker/scrounger narrative, to the reality that the vast majority of claimants have contributed to the system

all

of their lives, cannot be under-estimated. And as Ken is also here this afternoon, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank him for all he has done.

But while the rhetoric might be changing, the reality is not, with cuts to social security support and the anguish of unfair assessments.

The United Nations' Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recently reported that this Government's policies were leading to a 'human catastrophe'. Increasingly, sick and disabled people are facing poverty and isolation. As my Disability Equality Roadshow revealed, many feel like prisoners in their own homes; with dwindling social security support, too many are dying early, and even taking their own lives.

As we promised in our Manifesto with and for disabled people, Labour will deliver on the rights of disabled people, enshrining the UN Convention into UK law.

Conference, a Labour Government will transform our social security system from one that demonises, to one that is supportive and enabling. Like the NHS, it should be there for any one of us in our time of need, providing dignity and security for all.

For older people, this Tory Government has provided anything but dignity and security. Their failure to grapple with the pensions system has left many with dwindling workplace pensions or worse.

At the same time, the Tories have attacked the state pension, promising to increase the state pension age yet again. This has been most extreme for women born in the 1950s, many of whom have worked for well over 40 years and expected to retire at 60.

The acceleration of women's state pension equalisation by this Government has left hundreds of thousands of women in dire straits. I've heard of women sofa-surfing in their 60s, living off the kindness of family or friends, having used up all their savings, because they can no longer do the work they used to. Too often older people are discriminated at work, as well as when they try to get into work. A Government Minister suggested that women should go and find an apprenticeship during a recent debate!

These women feel understandable anger that they have done the right thing and that the Government has failed to deliver its side of the bargain. I have been meeting with them on my national

pensions tour. We promised in our Manifesto to provide pension credit and additional support to the two and a half million 1950s women still waiting to retire.

As a starter, I can announce today that a Labour Government in power now, would allow these women to retire up to two years early.

Conference, this is the difference a Labour Government would make. My challenge to this Government is to do the same and to do it now.

Thank you Conference, thank you to my wonderful team, and to my loving family. Now let's get on with getting Labour into Government!

ends