

# Gordon Brown speech in Greenock

- Manchester 'a global symbol of courage, defiance and unity' following terrorist atrocity, says Gordon Brown during speech
- As General Election campaigning restarts, he warns Conservative plans would leave more than 20million Briton hit with £1,000-a-year fall in household incomes by 2020
- Tory Britain a 'stagnation nation' as wages lag behind prices and benefit and tax credit cuts bite, says former PM
- Brown identifies families £1,000, £2,000 or £4,000 worse off by 2020
- Only top third will see living standards rise. When Tories say they are 'about the many and not the few', they mean hurting the many and helping the few
- North England, Scotland and Wales to suffer biggest hits with one quarter of population officially living in poverty – 5 million of them children

Gordon Brown today said that Manchester has become 'a global symbol of courage, defiance and unity' following Monday's terrorist atrocity which killed 22 people.

**During a speech in Greenock, Inverclyde, the former Prime Minister said:**

"Today and in the days and weeks ahead we will shed tears at the loss of so many children and young people.

"Too many lives have been taken but I say: They cannot take our unity, our solidarity, our support for each other.

"Hearts have been broken but our resolve remains unbreakable.

"Lives have been destroyed but our spirit is indestructible.

"They may think we are vulnerable but our strength of shared purpose makes us invulnerable.

"In the hours and days following the attack Manchester has become a worldwide symbol of courage, defiance and unity.

"To those who are doubters and who believe that terrorism will make us weak through fear, divide our communities and shatter our spirit...let them go to Manchester."

As campaigning restarted, Mr Brown also unveiled astonishing evidence showing that by 2020 more than 20million Britons will see a £20-a-week fall in living standards.

Almost 45 per cent of the British population – 23million people – will be poorer, and on average their households £1,000-a-year worse off, by the start

of the next decade, according to the alarming new figures.

And he warned that the Tories, if triumphant on June 8, will continue hurting families completing a 'decade of decline' with no end in sight to their slashing of the value of tax credits and child benefits.

Officially, the cuts and a raft of other shameful Tory policies are set to leave 15.7million British people – one quarter of the entire population – living in poverty by the end of the next parliament, according to the IFS.

Five million of them will be children, the former Prime Minister said in his speech today.

As hardship bites and a rise in family income comes to a juddering halt, grim new projections by the Resolution Foundation forecast the poorest third of working-age households, covering around 18 million adults and children, will see their average incomes fall by 10 per cent over the next few years.

And the Conservatives, according to the former Prime Minister, are not being honest about the fall in incomes.

**During a speech in support of Labour candidate for Inverclyde, Martin McCluskey, at Greenock's Beacon Arts Centre, Mr Brown said:**

"In every election the central economic issue is: What is going to happen to living standards?"

"Between now and 2020/2021, 45 per cent of the population – 23million people – will take a financial hit and on average their households will be £1,000 a year or £20 a week worse off

"Why? Because wages will be rising more slowly than prices – especially for nurses, teachers, carers and others among five million public sector workers, who will see only a one per cent rise in wages while prices rise much faster.

"Areas facing job losses such as Wales, the North and Scotland will feel it even more acutely.

"We are a nation where the Tories are creating living standards stagnation.

"The value of children's benefits and tax credits are now falling even faster than predicted as inflation bites even harder than previously thought due to the unexpectedly fast pace at which prices are rising."

There is little escape from hardship for middle and lower income families according to the Resolution Foundation study.

Statistics show:

- A couple with two children and a full-time single earner on National Minimum Wage with a household income of £21,000 will be £1,000 worse off by 2020.
- A single earner with one child working part-time with a household income

of £14,400 will be almost £2,000 (£1,900) worse of

- A working couple, one full time, one part time with three children and a household income of £32,100 – will be £3,000 worse off

**Mr Brown added:**

“The Tories talk about uniting the nation but rising poverty and worsening inequality will leave us more economically polarised and socially divided under Theresa May than at any time in living memory.

“The claim that her government is about helping mainstream Britain is undermined by the stark future of declining living standards ahead for the majority of people.

“The mainstream is being marginalised as the majority see their living standards fail to rise, or for millions, fall significantly.

“Conservatives talk about the many and the few but they are actually harming the many while helping the few.

“That’s why it’s essential to elect Labour MPs who get up in the morning to fight for social justice and will be voices for the mainstream – the middle and lower income Britain that is being hardest hit.”

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## [Kezia Dugdale’s statement on campaigning being suspended today](#)

This is a heartbreaking moment for our country, and our thoughts are with the families and friends of those who lost their lives in Manchester and with those who remain injured.

As a party, we are grieving for the people of Manchester. Yesterday in the Scottish Parliament I paid tribute to the dedication of the brave emergency service workers who ran into danger, as well as the actions of ordinary people who opened their doors, cared for scared youngsters, provided transport to concert-goers, and gave blood at donor banks to help those injured.

A further statement is expected by today following the raising of the threat level yesterday evening.

In the coming days there will be a toughening of our resolve in the face of terror, and a renewal of our belief in the enduring British values of tolerance and respect. We are all determined to make sure that such horrific acts will never undermine our freedom, nor our democracy.

But it is right to pause and remember those who have lost their lives. General Election campaigning at a local and national level will remain on hold in Scotland today.

Wednesday night's televised leaders' debate on STV has been postponed and all media engagements have been cancelled. When we resume our campaign it will be with fervour, and Jeremy Corbyn will shortly be joining us in Scotland as we all work tirelessly to elect a Labour Government for the many, not the few.

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## [Kezia Dugdale statement on Manchester terror attack](#)

**Below is the statement from Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale to the Scottish Parliament following the Manchester terror attack:**

"They would have been dressed in pink, in sparkles, bunny ears perched on their heads and grins on their faces. The very picture of innocence.

"The children who went to see American pop star and Disney TV actress, Ariana Grande, at the Manchester Arena last night would have been unable to contain their excitement. The atmosphere would have been electric.

"Every one of us has been there – been one of them. Enthralled by the sound and vision of a pop star at their peak. Desperate to see, in the flesh, the person whose image we've plastered on our bedroom walls.

"Being at a gig is a moment of sheer joy.

"Last night that joy was destroyed in a despicable act of cowardice.

"All that excitement, that innocent elation, turned to fear, to shock, and to horror.

"Just hours after they arrived, children left the concert crying, screaming, utterly bewildered by what had just happened; their ears ringing, not with the echo of pop music, but with the blast of a bomb.

"Today, those children will know that 22 of those who had shared the joy of the concert alongside them, are dead.

"That 59 people are in hospital with terrible injuries. And that too many parents are still desperately searching for the children who haven't come home.

"Those children too will know the phrase 'suicide bomber' and the appalling reality of what that means.

“A story which they might have watched on Newsround, couched in age-appropriate language to soften the roughest of edges, has brutally intruded into their young lives.

“For us, as adults, hearing the news of terrorist atrocities – be they bombs, or bullets, or cars mowing people down in the street – is all too sadly now commonplace.

“We tend to cover our children’s ears and eyes to protect them from the knowledge.

“And we hold them closer, all too aware of the fragility of their precious lives.

“But for those children and young people who witnessed last night’s abominable act, there is no softening the blow, no making it better, no suggesting that these things don’t happen here, or to us, or to people we know.

“They are now fully aware that when someone determines to kill others, when someone purposefully straps a bomb to their body with a twisted plan to detonate it among innocent children, that there is nothing any one of us can do to prevent the horrific, inevitable, outcome.

“And we cannot explain it to them. How can you tell an eight-year-old that there is a justifiable reason that children died last night? How can you explain the actions, the thought-process, of someone who can look at a concert full of young people and see nothing but a target?

“But what we can do is respond well. We can teach our children that the only way to counter such barbarity is not with hate and with fear, but with compassion, tolerance, kindness and love.

“Like the people of Manchester did last night; flocking to help, taking people home, offering places to stay, and searching for children who had become separated from their parents.

“Like those who work in our emergency services did – as they always do – running, unflinching, towards horror, rather than away from it, to offer comfort and care and rescue.

“No doubt over the coming days we will discover the name of the coward who chose to kill excited children at a concert, and there will be attempts to understand why they did it.

“For those who are grieving there will be no worthy answers. For those left traumatised, there will be no comprehension.

“What there will be though is a toughening of our resolve in the face of terror.

“A renewal of our belief in the enduring British values of tolerance and respect.

“And a determination to make sure that such horrific acts will never undermine our freedom, nor our democracy.”

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## **SCOTTISH LABOUR MANIFESTO TO OPPOSE ANOTHER DIVISIVE REFERENDUM**

22 May 2017

### **SCOTTISH LABOUR MANIFESTO TO OPPOSE ANOTHER DIVISIVE REFERENDUM**

Opposition to another divisive independence referendum will be at the heart of Scottish Labour's manifesto to be launched today.

Writing in the Scottish Labour manifesto, Kezia Dugdale and Jeremy Corbyn both condemn the SNP's focus on independence at the expense of the day job.

The manifesto states:

***Labour opposes a second Scottish independence referendum. It is unwanted and unnecessary, and we will campaign tirelessly to ensure that Scotland remains part of the UK.***

***Independence would lead to turbo-charged austerity for Scottish families. Scotland would face a £15 billion deficit if the UK were to be torn apart, hurting the poorest and most vulnerable in our society.***

***The SNP needs to respect the verdict of the majority of Scots in 2014 and abandon its divisive plan to re-run the referendum. It needs to get on with the day job and reverse the cuts being inflicted on Scotland's public services.***

***Scottish Labour will never support independence, because we believe that together we're stronger.***

Labour's UK manifesto also confirmed the party's strong opposition to both another divisive independence referendum and separation itself.

In her manifesto foreword, **Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale writes:**

***"Labour is the only party which knows it is the power of the whole UK working in partnership which benefits the many, not the few – that is at the root of our belief that together we're stronger.***

***"That is why Labour opposes independence and a second divisive independence referendum. Independence is not the answer to dealing with Scotland's flagging economy or our pressured public services.***

*"The SNP has one focus – independence. Labour will campaign tirelessly to ensure that the desire of the majority of Scots to remain part of the UK is respected."*

In his manifesto foreword, **UK Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn** writes:

*"In Scotland, child poverty is increasing, the number of those working but still classified as poor is at its highest level since devolution, and health inequalities stubbornly persist. Rather than tackle poverty, the SNP obsesses over another reckless referendum that threatens people's futures."*

*"Labour is opposed to independence because it would inflict turbo-charged austerity on the Scottish people. We will stand firm in our opposition to a second referendum because we know that together we're stronger and unity is still our strength."*

*"Historically, it has been the solidarity and common endeavour of our Labour and trade union movement that has transformed the lives of the many, not the few, in our great country."*

*"Just as it has always been the case, only our movement offers the hope and the contemporary solutions to society's problems. Nationalism, in whatever form, does not."*

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## [Constituency profile: Glasgow North](#)

**Constituency:** Glasgow North



**Candidate:** Pam Duncan

**About the candidate:** Pam lives in Glasgow and is a dedicated disability, equality and human rights activist.

**The choice at this election:** The choice at this election: The choice in Glasgow North is simple. If you want an MP who will continually stand up for the needs of the people of Glasgow North and not another divisive independence referendum, you have to vote for Pam. Labour is the only party that can beat the SNP here. Voters can choose one of two nationalists called Patrick – the SNP candidate and the Green candidate – or they can pick Pam who knows that nationalism doesn't provide the answers to the problems facing Glasgow North.

**Pam said:** "I'm standing as Labour's candidate for Glasgow North because I cannot sit back and watch our country be torn apart. I'm standing because I cannot let our hard fought rights be bargained away in the aftermath of Brexit. I'm standing for progressive taxation system. I'm standing to end zero hour contracts. I'm standing to close the gender pay gap. I'm standing

to defend the human rights act. I'm standing because women cannot live in fear of the rape clause. I's standing because I want disabled women the length and breadth of the country to see that disabled women can, and should, speak up and be heard.

"On June 8 we can send a powerful message to Nicola Sturgeon that we do not want another divisive independence referendum, but instead we want to focus on the issues that impact people's lives every single day. Only Labour will stand up for the people of Glasgow North, and it's time for an MP who is focused on this constituency not another referendum."