

The message of 1997 is as relevant today as it was then: we need people to vote for change, to vote for Labour – Gwynne

**Andrew Gwynne MP,
Labour's National Campaigns and Elections Chair, on the 20th anniversary of Labour's 1997 election victory, said:**

"Twenty years on from 1997, the lesson of that election is that it takes a Labour government to bring about transformative change for the many not just the few.

"In 1997, after 18 years of the Tories running down the country, Britain needed a Labour government to change working people's lives for the better. That's exactly what the Labour government did between 1997 and 2010.

"The achievements of that government were many. From the New Deal which helped millions in to work, to the National Minimum Wage which made that work pay. From peace in Northern Ireland to Sure Start which made a difference to millions of children and their families. In education, school spending per pupil was doubled, thousands of schools rebuilt and 42,000 more teachers helped deliver some of the best ever school results. And for the NHS a Labour government was transformative, with the largest hospital building programme in history and 44,000 more doctors and 89,000 more nurses driving up standards and driving down waiting times.

"Now, in 2017, we again need a Labour government to rebuild and transform a country that is suffering from Tory neglect and deepening inequality. The message of 1997 is as relevant today as it was then: we need people to vote for change, to vote for Labour and for a country for the many not the few."

Jeremy Corbyn speech to the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) conference

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party,

speech to the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) conference:

Thank you for inviting me here today to your annual conference in the year of your union's 120th anniversary.

I want to pay tribute to Russell Hobby, your General Secretary: a great advocate for head teachers who has overseen you joining the TUC, working with other teachers' and education unions.

I also want to pay tribute to the next Education Secretary, Angela Rayner, who is a tireless campaigner and passionate advocate for your profession and for children.

It is a great honour to address you, leaders of one of the most important professions in our society, those who look after the education, the wellbeing, and the future of our children.

That is why Labour is making our children's education one of the cornerstones of our General Election campaign.

The choice in this election could not be clearer – and it's not the re-run of the EU referendum that the Prime Minister wants it to be.

Britain needs a government for the many not the few – one that's ready to invest in our economy and public services. But the Conservatives have demonstrated that cannot be them, preferring to give the richest and largest corporations tax hand-outs worth tens of billions.

The NHS and social care have been pushed into a state of emergency. Housebuilding has fallen to its lowest peacetime rate since the 1920s. Schools across the country face real terms cuts in funding per pupil, and class sizes are rising – while those young people who

want to go to university face huge debts.

There is no greater responsibility than ensuring our children get the education that they deserve. I know this, you know this, parents up and down this country know this. But it is clear that this Conservative Government has its focus elsewhere.

The NAHT has correctly pointed out that this election is make or break time for our children's education system.

As all of you will know, the National Audit Office confirms that schools are facing a cut of three billion pounds in real terms by 2020, the first real terms cut in education budgets in a generation.

This is an absolutely staggering figure and shows the need for a complete change of direction in how the government of this country treats our schools.

And we have to ask ourselves: is this how we want to treat the education system of our children? Is this how Britain's children deserve to be treated?

Do our children deserve to be held back by a chronic shortage of teachers?

Do our children deserve to be crammed into schools like sardines?

Do our children deserve to be taught by teachers whose morale is at an all-time low?

Not by any fault of the teachers, they are the people who also bear the burden of government cuts, but the fault of governments who fail to recognise the importance of investing in the lives of children, and those who teach and support them, up and down this country.

That is why we must value teachers, because if we don't we lose them. And you know better than anyone there is a recruitment crisis and that crisis will be made even worse if we don't secure the rights of EU nationals.

Last year 5,000 teachers from EU countries qualified to teach here and there are thousands more working to teach our children. So that's why, as Keir Starmer set out this week, a Labour government will guarantee the rights of EU nationals living here.

And if we lose teachers, we lose subjects, we narrow the horizons of young people. So that's why I

passionately

believe in an Arts Pupil Premium so that every primary school child will benefit from a £160 million cash boost to help pupils learn to play instruments, learn drama and dance and have “regular access” to theatres, galleries or museums in their local areas.

And yet, while all this is happening, while funding to our children’s education is cut, multinational corporations have received multi-billion pound tax giveaways

How can it be right that money is being siphoned straight out of our children’s schools and directly into the pockets of the super-rich?

We have to be clear, once and for all, that enough is enough.

Throughout this General Election campaign, we will be making absolutely clear our commitment to build a country for the many, and not just the few.

A vital part of that will be creating an education system that provides for every child regardless of their background, or their parents’ income.

Labour will introduce a National Education Service, ensuring excellent learning opportunities for all from early years to adult education.

What we need now – and what you as teaching professionals need now – are concrete answers and concrete solutions to the problems that our education system is facing.

That is why Labour has set out a plan to help give every young person the best start in life possible, by introducing universal free school meals for pupils at primary schools. It’s a policy that is fully costed, and will be paid for by introducing VAT on private school fees.

There are clear educational benefits to providing universal free school meals. It boosts the attainment and level of education of our children. We know that these early formative years are the most important in a child’s education and we have a duty to provide for our children the best we possibly can throughout that period.

It’s a policy that demonstrates

how a Labour government would care for the many, and not just the few.

We will ensure that every single child receives a healthy and nutritious meal which will not only boost children's productivity in the classroom but also helps to ensure their personal wellbeing, no matter what their background.

Children eating together is a great start in life.

So not only will the policy help children throughout their time in education, it will also help teachers who will see the benefits of improved concentration and improved attainment in the classroom.

And it will help parents who will not only save money but will have the peace of mind in knowing that their child is getting a healthy school meal during the day

Investing in the health of our nation's children, is investing in our nation's future.

If we are to truly place value on our children's education, we must also place value on the teachers, head teachers and other school staff who deliver that education.

We must put an end to the continual attacks on the teaching profession, end the downward pressure on pay and conditions, the constant undermining of morale and the erosion of standards that means we have more unqualified teachers than ever in our classrooms.

That's why, as part of the comprehensive programme Labour has set out today to strengthen rights at work and end the race to the bottom in the jobs market, we have confirmed a Labour government will lift the cap on public sector pay.

It cannot be right that those who provide our vital public services have their pay squeezed year after year. Britain's public service employees deserve a pay rise.

And we must give the teaching profession the recognition it deserves, not only in terms of pay, but also in terms of status in our society.

We need to listen to you, the teaching professionals, on how you believe schools can be improved and respect the huge wealth of talent and knowledge that lies in the teaching profession as

a whole.

I have always believed that the people who know how to do a job best are those who do it day in day out. We must start listening to parents, teachers and head teachers: you are the people who know how schools should be run and you are the people who best understand the needs of our children.

That is why Labour has taken our lead from the NAHT – and from the other teachers' unions – when we set out in no uncertain terms our opposition to the expansion of grammar schools in this country.

Not only does the mass introduction of segregation in our education system not help the overwhelming majority of this country's children, it also returns us to what are frankly Victorian notions of education based on a narrow curriculum.

The task is clear: we must build an education system that suits the needs of our children and the opportunities they will have in the jobs market of tomorrow.

And if we are to build an economy worthy of the 21st century, we need a schools system that looks forwards, and not backwards to the failed models of the past.

We must recognise that every single child in this country has talents and every single child deserves the chance to flourish and thrive to their maximum potential in whichever field suits them best.

But our children's schools do not exist in a vacuum. I am always in awe of the local head teachers I work with. Like thousands of children, I have learned so much from them.

And what I admire most is their commitment – not just to managing their schools and to educating our children – but the multi-faceted demands of the children in their community: their housing issues, immigration problems, their mental health. You are the heart of your communities.

You are part of a wider care system and you need the other parts of that system to work effectively alongside you, youth services, the NHS and social care.

Support for schools by these services is essential to promote pupil wellbeing. The duty to directly address pupils' mental health needs ultimately rests with the social and care

services.

No school should be asked to fund health and social care services from the school budget. That is why Labour has pledged to address the chronic underfunding for social care and the NHS.

As you all know schools are most effective as places of learning when they work together with high quality social care and health services to meet the needs of all students but especially those who are most vulnerable.

One in ten children and young people in this country suffer from a mental health condition and 75 percent of adult mental health problems are found to begin before the age of 18.

We must prioritise the mental wellbeing of our children. This is the least they deserve.

It is vital that we enable early intervention and provide support when problems first emerge but to do this we must build an education system that integrates social and health care.

Improving the way our society deals with mental health is a particular concern of mine because I am passionate to see opportunities for all.

That's why I have been so impressed by the work so many of you do for children with special needs and how good special needs co-ordinators can liberate children from what has sometimes been a lifetime of exclusion.

That focus on the individual child is what drives our determination to reduce class sizes. We know that half a million children have been landed in super-size classes of 31 pupils or more.

This government is failing on education on its own terms. The Prime Minister herself has said that super-sized classes are proof of a school system in crisis. So then why is it allowed to continue?

Why are our children's schools, not getting the funding that they deserve? This is a choice. And it is the wrong choice. The cut to schools funding is also a breach of their manifesto the Conservatives' pledge to protect schools funding.

Labour will ensure schools have the resources they need.

I'm afraid I can't give you a

sneak preview of the full Labour manifesto today but be assured if it's a choice between a tax giveaway to the largest corporations paying the lowest rates of tax in the developed world or funding for our schools. Labour will make very different choices from the Conservatives.

We have already started to set some of that out not just our free schools meals policy.

And our commitment to reintroduce the Educational Maintenance Allowance for college students from lower incomes.

We are also committed to restoring maintenance grants for university students so that no one is held back from realising their ambitions and so that every schoolchild knows that the options of further and higher Education are available to them.

We must not be ashamed to value education, for education's own sake.

Schools should exist to get the very best from our children, to give them the best start in life, to enable them to succeed in whichever walk of life they chose.

Whereas Theresa May's government has repeatedly cut resources and staffing we will invest in our children's futures because they deserve nothing less.

The excuses from the government come thick and fast. They've blamed teachers for not working hard enough, they've diverted funds to their vanity projects. £138.5 million wasted on schools that have closed, partially closed or never opened in the first place.

We will not bring back a system that blamed children and parents for not passing the eleven plus and getting into a grammar school.

They blame everybody else, to divert attention from their own damaging failures. They need head teachers to tell them, own up, take responsibility and say sorry.

Labour will give schools the funding that our children deserve, the funding that teachers and headteachers deserve and the investment that our country and our economy deserves.

This election can be the chance for a fresh start, with a Labour government that will invest to create shared prosperity, protect our public services and build a fairer Britain.

A Labour government will work with you, we will give schools the funding the need and we will ensure you and

your
staff get the respect and resources you need.

We have a duty to our children and
we will meet it.

Thank you.

[The next Labour government will transform the workplace](#)

Labour's 20 point plan to end the 'rigged economy' in work

Labour is backing a comprehensive programme to strengthen rights at work, make sure new jobs are good jobs, and end the race to the bottom in pay, conditions and job security.

Low pay and insecurity have mushroomed under the Conservatives. Labour will invest in the jobs and industries of the future, and take action to enforce a floor under employment standards across the board – so that all jobs are decent jobs.

The next Labour government will bring in a 20 point plan for security and equality at work:

- **Give**
all workers equal rights from day one, whether part-time or full-time, temporary or permanent – so that all workers have the same rights and protections whatever kind of job they have
- **Ban**
zero hours contracts – so that every worker gets a guaranteed number of hours each week
- **Ensure**
that any employer wishing to recruit labour from abroad does not undercut workers at home – because it causes divisions when one workforce is used against another
- **Repeal**
the Trade Union Act and roll out sectoral collective bargaining – because the most effective way to maintain good rights at work is through a

trade union

- **Guarantee**

trade unions a right to access workplaces – so that unions can speak to members and potential members

- **Introduce**

four new Bank Holidays – we'll bring our country together with new holidays to mark our four national patron saints' days, so that workers in Britain get the same proper breaks as in other countries.

- **Raise**

the minimum wage to the level of the living wage (expected to be at least £10 per hour by 2020) – so that no one in work gets poverty pay

- **End**

the public sector pay cap – because public sector wages have fallen and our public sector workers deserve a pay rise

- **Amend**

the takeover code to ensure every takeover proposal has a clear plan in place to protect workers and pensioners – because workers shouldn't suffer when a company is sold

- **Roll**

out maximum pay ratios – of 20:1 in the public sector and companies bidding for public contracts – because it cannot be right that wages at the top keep rising while everyone else's stagnates

- **Ban**

unpaid internships – because it's not fair for some to get a leg up when others can't afford to

- **Enforce**

all workers' rights to trade union representation at work – so that all workers can be supported when negotiating with their employer

- **Abolish**

employment tribunal fees – so that people have access to justice

- **Double**

paid paternity leave to four weeks and increase paternity pay – because fathers are parents too and deserve to spend more time with their new babies

- **Strengthen**

protections for women against unfair redundancy – because no one should be penalised for having children

- **Hold**

a public inquiry into blacklisting – to ensure that blacklisting truly becomes and remains a thing of the past

- **Give**

equalities reps statutory rights – so they have time to protect workers from discrimination

- **Reinstate**

protection against third party harassment – because everyone deserves to be safe at work

- **Use**

public spending power to drive up standards, including only awarding public contracts to companies which recognise trade unions

- **Introduce**

a civil enforcement system to ensure compliance with gender pay auditing– so that all workers have fair access to employment and promotion opportunities and are treated fairly at work

John McDonnell MP, Labour’s Shadow Chancellor, said:

“These policies will be the cornerstone of the next Labour government’s programme to bring an end to the rigged economy that many experience in workplaces across Britain.

“The scandal of six million people earning less than the living wage, and four million children growing up in poverty are not inevitable. It only takes a change of government to bring these outrages to an end.

“The measures we are planning will make that possible, update our country for the 21st century and prepare us for the economic challenges ahead.

“They will also underpin the values we want to see in the British economy, and underline the scale of Labour’s plans to transform the workplace from the shop-floor up to the boardroom.

“When voters go to the polls on 8th June they should know that if they vote Labour, they will be voting for a change in the balance of power not only in society but in their places of work.

“It will mean tearing up the Tory status quo that allows most people’s wages to fall behind prices, and allow them to start to share in the wealth they help to create.

“Only a Labour government led by Jeremy Corbyn will stand up for the many in our offices and factories, while the Tories are only prepared to protect big business and a wealthy few.”

Rebecca Long-Bailey, Shadow Secretary of State for Business,

Energy and Industrial Strategy, said:

“Labour’s 20 point plan on employment rights seeks not only to extend the rights of workers but enforce them too. For too long people have fallen through the gaps in the law or suffered because the law is simply inadequate, we intend to stop this. This election offers a clear choice: do you want a labour market run for the many or the few.”

[Jeremy Corbyn speech – Stepping up for Britain](#)

**Jeremy Corbyn speaking
in east London today, said:**

This morning I’m going to say a few words about you. And even some about me. But if you don’t mind, I’ll come to that later.

First I want to say that this general election more than any I have previously fought will define our times.

Last week, I said the dividing lines in this election could not be clearer.

I pointed to a clash of interests between working people on the one hand, and the privileged and super-rich on the other.

This is not about a government getting its priorities muddled. And it’s not simply a case of saying one thing and doing another.

It’s about presiding over a rigged system that shapes all our lives.

Of course that’s not something the Conservatives want to talk about. It’s why, I think, they’re so desperate to make this general election all about Brexit.

Don’t be taken in.

The Conservatives would much rather make incredible promises about Britain’s future outside the EU

than
talk about a scorecard of broken promises and neglect stretching back seven
years.

Even their approach to
Brexit betrays what they're really about.

Unlike Labour's
jobs-first plan, it is both reckless and rigid. And entirely in keeping with
their record in government.

Make no mistake; a
Brexit for the few is being cooked up by this government.

One where any money
saved is handed out as tax cuts to the super-rich and their corporations.

Where new trade deals
with the US and elsewhere are used to drive down our working conditions,
environmental regulations and food standards.

I think you can guess
what is likely to happen to the many in a rigid and reckless Brexit. But what
about the Conservatives themselves, and their friends and backers?

Do you think their
personal prospects will suffer? Do you think their lives will get harder as
wages slide and jobs become even less secure?

Unlikely, I think you'll
agree. And that's because the Conservatives and their backers can afford to
opt
out when things go wrong. They've been doing it for decades.

They already send their
children to the most exclusive schools and universities. They already
dominate
the upper rungs of every career ladder.

In truth, they have a
get out of jail free card when the Conservatives are at the controls.

So I have a message for
you all today: Unless you too have a get out jail free card, it's time to
Step
Up.

And when I say Step Up,
I mean register to vote. Claim your future.

You have till 22 May!

Over 2.4 million young

people are missing from the UK's electoral register. Barely 40 percent of 18 to 24-year olds turn out to vote.

The Conservatives are more than happy with this state of affairs. Apathy and resignation will secure them seats on election day.

I ask you to Step Up because when I talk to people all over the country, I'm struck by something troubling.

It's not that our young people don't have the energy and talent to succeed. Our country is full of potential.

But something hangs in the air. It typically goes unspoken.

It's the unheard story of why so many of us are scaling back our hopes and dreams in favour of just getting by.

It's the reason why this country is unable to unleash its potential.

Because as families, communities – entire regions – we are all being held back.

If you're young – like many here today – it's a familiar feeling:

If you feel trapped in a job that barely covers your rent.

If you feel anxious about keeping on top of credit cards and loans.

If your heart sinks each time you see the prices of homes displayed in estate agent windows.

Then you're being held back.

In a Fairer Britain, government would be bending over backwards to unleash your potential.

You're our future after all.

You'd be supported to be
confident and equipped for higher paid and secure jobs.

You'd be able to look
ahead without mounting debt taking away your choices.

And you'd be able to
enjoy the security and rewards of one day bringing up a family in a home of
your own.

Being held back means we
can't provide the life that we want for ourselves and those closest to us.

And it hurts. It makes
people angry and worst of all resigned to the idea that nothing can be done
about it. We end up blaming ourselves or each other.

This is life in
Conservative Britain.

It's why a Fairer
Britain has to be the choice at this election.

It's also why Labour
will unveil plans to upgrade our economy.

Because unless we move
from a rigged to an upgraded economy, there can be no Fairer Britain.

That is what June 8th
is all about.

Don't let the
Conservatives hold you back.

Don't let the Conservatives
Hold Britain Back.

And now for a sentence
I've yet to utter in my political life: Enough about you, what about me.

I've just laid down the
gauntlet and asked you to Step Up.

Each and every one of us
must Step Up for Britain. Including me.

In the 34-years since I
became a MP, I have been attacked for what I believe in. But it has not
changed
my core values – and sadly many of the problems we faced then are still with
us.

In 1983, I
stood up in Parliament for the first time and used my maiden speech to
condemn
deeply damaging cuts in public services and the NHS.

It's a tragedy that I
could make a very similar speech today and it would once again hold true.

Between then and now I
learned first-hand how the privilege of being an MP could help achieve
change.
Profound and lasting change.

At the time, young
protesters were being shot dead on the streets by the racist apartheid regime
in South Africa – Nelson Mandela and hundreds of ANC leaders were in prison.

The Conservative
Government refused to impose sanctions, entertained the leaders of the regime
and banned protests outside the South African embassy in London.

Being an MP helped bring
attention to that ban and the wider cause of South Africa's liberation – and
got a group of us arrested.

But the space for people
in Britain to organise in support of freedom in South Africa was defended and
strengthened.

And I realised then that
political leaders can, if they want to, create and preserve the space for
others to organise and transform countries.

My role is different now
but there is a common thread: we should act together, to overturn unfairness
and create a better society.

It became my yardstick
for measuring the performance of governments going back three decades, Labour
and Conservative.

In that time, I've seen
Prime Ministers and Leaders of the Opposition come and go.

But for all their
achievements and failures, what I didn't see was a sustained attempt to rid
this country of what really holds people back.

I never heard a
clear invitation for everyone in the country to work together and
create a real alternative to our rigged economy.

So when I was asked to

put my name forward in Labour's 2015 leadership election, I felt I should step up.

I didn't expect to win.

But under my leadership, we have forced the Conservatives into one U-turn after another: over cuts to tax credits, disability payments and their recent attempt to increase national insurance for the self-employed.

And I respect my critics when they make a reasoned case. They are doing what I have often tried to do – and that is to challenge leadership.

It reminds me of the 1990s when the political mainstream bought into Conservative ideas about markets, finance and the economy. It ultimately left us with no defence against a global financial crisis that had its roots in another country's housing market.

Again, it taught me that if leaders go unchallenged, they can make some of the most damaging mistakes. And if party leaders put themselves ahead of serving the people, they stop listening and even put our country at risk.

Barely nine months into Theresa May's premiership, there are clear warning signs that she and her closest advisers are slipping into that presidential bunker mentality.

Whereas it is the job of leadership to hold open the space for dissent, new thinking and fit-for-purpose policy.

So while it might not be the stuff of soundbites, I have always believed in standing firm and empowering others to make up their minds and come on board when they are ready.

It is the mind-set that gets community centres and nurseries built. And increasingly defends them from closure.

It is the mind-set that negotiates hard for better conditions in the workplace.

It is the mind-set that serves the many not the few.

For many years, I couldn't see much beyond how so many political leaders manipulated us while giving in again and again to vested interests.

I didn't
want to be like that. And it wasn't clear to me there could be another way.

But I've
learned there is.

Whereas
insecure leaders want to feel stronger by asking you to give them more power.

I recognise
strong leadership as equipping you with more power.

And that starts with
encouraging you to Step Up and register to vote – as part of a wider
engagement
with your community.

Because there's no doubt
that these are anxious times.

Individually, more of us
face uncertainty at work.

Nationally, we wonder
how we will make the transition out of the EU in a way that protects jobs and
living standards.

And globally, we wonder
how safe we are as extreme right wing movements and violent conflicts spread.

I hope you can see now
that there is more than one way to respond.

We could seek a fragile
calm. And hope someone in power knows what they're doing and will guide us
through.

That means looking to
whoever's in charge and welcoming their reassurance. We don't look further,
we
don't ask questions.

It's the response the few have bet on the many settling for.

I'm in this job because
I believe there is a better way to respond.

It's about rejecting
fake reassurances or simple slogans from government.

It's about sharing ideas
and deciding upon real and lasting answers.

We are not going to have
free thinking shut down by a hostile media or an elite that scoffs at anyone
who dares to step out line.

No, each of us has a
contribution to make. We have ideas for a better tomorrow and we are going to
respond together.

We are a party that
wants to bring together people and ideas, and harness the thirst for real and
lasting change.

If you agree our times
demand a response from all parts of our society and all corners of our
country,
then I am proud to be your leader.

And if you want someone
to hold that space open for you to help change the direction of your life and
our country, then I am proud to be your leader.

Because it's only
through unleashing our talent that Britain will succeed on the world stage.

Since its foundation,
the Labour Party has believed we are richer together. Seven years into
Conservative government, we are poorer for being apart.

Across the country,
people are being held back like never before.

Unless we change course,
expect more insecure work for less pay. More stress for less time with our
families.

It's gone too far and
the country knows it.

Quite simply, only the
Labour Party can deliver a Fairer Britain.

But we need your help to
do so.

Please register to vote.

Step Up for Britain and vote
Labour on June 8th.

ENDS

The Government have refused to set out their state pension age plans – McDonnell

John McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, commenting on the Government's refusal to set out their State Pension age plans, said:

"Today the Government have refused to set out their plans for the State Pension age before the election, despite the legal requirement to report to Parliament before the 7th May.

"It comes on the back of the Prime Minister's continued refusal to commit to the State Pension triple-lock.

"This is yet more worrying news for pensioners already hit by a squeeze to their living standards. Labour is calling for clarity from the Tories on their plans for the future of the State Pension age.

"Pensioners, and working people, cannot afford not to know the future of the State Pension age.

"This is more evidence that this election is a choice between a Tory party that fails working people and a Labour Party that will stand up for working people and deliver a better, fairer Britain."

Ends