

# CAMPAIGN BRIEFING

CLPD publication for CLPs and Labour Party Members;  
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## FIGHTING THE DEVASTATION OF TORY CUTS

**Margaret Greenwood, MP Wirral West, and founder member of Defend our NHS**



The next Labour government will transform Britain, a transformation that is urgently needed.

The devastation caused by Tory cuts can be seen everywhere: in the dismantling of our public realm and the undermining of public services. We see libraries, swimming pools, and youth services closing; a failure to provide for the frail and vulnerable; and rising levels of child poverty.

And of course they are privatising our NHS, with NHS managers told to 'think the unthinkable', with closures and the rationing of services underway. The abolition of student nurse bursaries was a calculated measure to wipe out the public-sector ethos that has served our NHS so well since its foundation.

The systematic undermining of employment and trade union rights has left us with a deeply exploitative labour market of insecurity, with hundreds of thousands of workers on zero-hour contracts and three-hour contracts - anything but a secure job with a good weekly wage.

As the Tories tear apart the very fabric of our society through their pursuit of a neo-liberal agenda, they show a determination to erase our collective memory of a better way of doing things. In their blinkered pursuit of free market

values, they also reveal their disregard for the shared responsibility we all have for one another.

This August, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued the gravest of warnings, yet the government's response is reckless: instead of taking responsibility for the impact of the environmental policies, they are promoting the extraction of fossil fuels with the ambition of exporting the technology around the world.

I recently visited the Preston New Road site to show my support for the anti-fracking campaigners. They told me that within the first two weeks of drilling, 30 seismic events had been recorded; four of those were of such magnitude that drilling had to be stopped for 18 hours.

We have to take a stand. We must not become inured to the closures, privatisations and sell-offs, nor to the blithe indifference to the stark warnings on climate change. It must not become the new normal.

### **Labour will deliver change**

The reception of the Labour Party Manifesto 2017 showed clearly that the country is hungry for change, and that it is the Labour Party that will provide this.

We will reverse the privatisation of the NHS, repeal the Health and Social Care Act, and reinstate student nurse bursaries.

We will lay the foundations of a National Care Service for England so that people can be supported with dignity.

We will invest in public services and rebuild our public realm.

We will prioritise tackling inequality and child poverty, and invest heavily in early years so all children can have the very best chance in life.

And we will face the challenges of climate change head-on, banning fracking and making the move to a low-carbon economy a priority.

**The challenges before our society are immense. It is vital we meet them with our Labour values guiding us.**

**STOP PRESS: GET READY FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION!**

All hands on the tiller to prepare for the coming General Election. All out to see Jeremy as the next PM!

PLEASE PASS THIS NEWSLETTER ALONG TO ENSURE A WIDE CIRCULATION

# THE TORIES ARE PRICING US OFF RAIL

**Mick Whelan, General Secretary, ASLEF**

**Originally published in CLPD's Yellow Pages, 2018**



There are some strange people around. Take James Price of the right-wing think tank the TaxPayers' Alliance. Last month, when the Labour Party called for a freeze in fares to help hard-pressed families, he said that, as a hard-nosed free marketer, he reckons it's right to price people off trains.

"It would be wrong to announce any kind of fares freeze, as it would hurt rail users, as well as taxpayers, who subsidise rail in the UK whether or not they use trains. Taxpayers would be subsidising rail users to the tune of more than £1 billion over a Parliament if fares were frozen, and rail users would suffer a worse experience from more crowded

trains and more delays. Instead, the trade union-caused bloated wage bill should be addressed."

## **Factually and morally wrong**

That's factually wrong, of course, but that has never stopped the weird people of the extreme right. Office of Rail and Road figures show that train operators' total costs are £12.6 billion – of which staff costs are just £2.9 billion (23%).

That's morally wrong too. Government statistics reveal that passenger journeys were down from 1,729 million in 2016-17 to 1,705 million in 2017-18, while season ticket sales have plummeted 9.2%.

The Tories would have you believe this is due to the changing nature of

work. They're right, to the extent that zero-hours contracts, faux self-employment and job insecurity make people reluctant to buy a season ticket. But the brutal truth is that passengers are being priced off our railways.

## **Fares are 20% higher in real terms**

Fares across all operators are now 20% higher in real terms than they were before privatisation. We care because industrially we want a thriving, successful railway that works for everyone in this country. And we care politically – because we want a socialist society in which everyone has a fair chance.

The government has ordered a review of the rail industry. Well, we know the problem, and the solution. The franchise system isn't just flawed, it has failed and is broken beyond repair.

## **It's time to bring Britain's railways back into public ownership.**

# LESSONS FROM THE LUMP

**Stevie Stevenson, former leading light in EPIU, CLPD EC**

**Originally published in the Morning Star 5th Oct 2018**

Bogus self-employment will need to be exposed as the scandal that was modeled in the 1980s on a part of the black economy known as 'The Lump'.

In the 1960s and '70s, The Lump was the name used for cowboy, non-union, supposedly self-employed skilled and non-skilled workers in the building industry. At that time, PAYE direct employment was standard practice throughout the whole economy.

The Lump was devised by some of the more devious building industry employers as a system to avoid taxation

and increase their profits, but also to prevent site level union organisation. Some of the more corrupt cases led to prosecutions.

## **Fighting Thatcher's legacy**

In the eighties, Thatcher government employment secretary Norman Tebbit spoke to a National Conference of Construction Industry Employers. The trade press reported on Tebbit's brash statement that "The Lump can be a good thing if properly used."

The Thatcher government had a clear plan to legitimise The Lump. It changed tax and employment legislation, various other controls and regulations, all to create more self-employed working.

The neoliberal objective was to replace trade union collectivism with individualism throughout the economy.

It has had a huge effect on the size, structure and culture of British trade unionism. The whole trade union movement, in particular TUC Congress House, should not continue to be silent on the 1980s.

**We should be the strongest supporters of Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell in their condemnation of neoliberalism and its disastrous consequences.**



**BITEBACKS**

*"Food banks gave out 1.6 million parcels last year. Our data shows almost half of referrals, made due to a delay in benefits being paid, were linked to Universal Credit."*

Garry Lemon, Director of Policy and Research, The Trussell Trust, May '19.

# A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE IN N. IRELAND DEPENDS ON THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT

**Rachel Garnham, CLP  
Representative on  
Labour’s NEC, CLPD EC**

Defending and extending a woman’s right to choose on abortion is a cornerstone of women's liberation across the globe.

Last year's Annual Women's Conference had the opportunity to debate and discuss abortion rights and was right to wholeheartedly welcome the result of the referendum on the repeal of the 8th amendment to the Constitution of Ireland. This was a huge victory for women in Ireland and across the world. It was led by Irish women and their allies who support abortion rights, and follows a string of victories for equality and human rights south of the border. Ireland became the first country in the world to adopt equal marriage by popular referendum in 2015.

It is equally important we campaign for better access to abortion here in Britain and to support campaigns elsewhere for women’s rights. But we should never adopt the attitude of ‘Britain knows best’. All over the world, human rights in general and the rights of women in particular have been used and hijacked for reactionary political agendas - who can forget how the denial

of girls’ access to schooling featured so strongly in the propaganda for the disastrous war in Afghanistan? Women were clearly not better off as a result of that war.

**We should never seek to impose our solutions**

Campaigns in Britain should always support the efforts of Irish women to advance their own rights. But they are best placed to assess what is achievable, and how progress can be made.

In this country, we should never seek to impose solutions on others. Specifically, in the case of Ireland, we must take into account and respect the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) which has brought peace and some progress. It is not for Westminster to impose legislation outside the GFA - indeed it would be a breach of the GFA for Westminster to do so. And any idea that Westminster could be a reliable guarantor of human rights in Ireland is denied by history.

Abortion is a human rights issue, not simply a health one. But we still should be wary of any ‘solutions’ which cut the health service out of the equation and the access to safe and legal abortions that entails.

**The GFA remains the ultimate guarantor**

Instead, the guarantor of all human rights in the north of Ireland is the GFA itself. This is the only safe avenue to go down to achieve sustained progress on abortion there. Jeremy Corbyn’s speech in Belfast called for the government to reconvene the British-Irish Inter-governmental Conference to break the


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deadlock at Stormont and enable progress on a range of issues. This is the right approach.

For all of us who support abortion rights, this is a central issue for the Intergovernmental Conference to address - there isn’t any other legal route. And by-passing or ripping up the GFA would be disastrous for all human rights in the North.

**This is the framework for making progress on a woman's right to choose across Ireland and must be the cornerstone for all our future debates.**



**BITEBACKS**

*"I am concerned that El Gato may be a Tory, given its disappointing individualism and lack of concern for others."*

Jeremy Corbyn, describing his family's sleeping cat featured on the JC Christmas Card. Guardian 15th Dec '18.

# BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE UK

**Cecile Wright, Ethnic Minorities Officer, Derby North CLP, CLPD EC**

*"Some members have the impression that BAME (black and minority ethnic) electoral candidates are somewhat only welcomed in areas with a large population from their own particular faith or ethnic groups (an assumption clearly not applied in relation to white candidates) ... There is a fairly widespread feeling that BAME candidates are less likely to be selected for parliamentary by-elections in particular. I am ...voicing the feelings and frustration of too many loyal Labour Party members."*

The Shami Chakrabarti Inquiry, 2016.

2018 marked the hundredth anniversary of the Representation of the People Act, which gave all men and some women the right to vote in local and general elections. The issue of political representation is essential for democratic legitimacy and has received growing attention from the Labour Party. However, there is still a gross under-representation of Black and minority ethnic people as MPs and councillors, particularly women.

This is strikingly at odds with their advocacy for the community through women's refuges, supplementary schools, credit unions, and community-based services.

In stark contrast to political under-representation black and minority ethnic women and men are over-represented in the prison population, the unemployed, those excluded from school, the low-paid, and the stopped and searched. Indeed, they are nine times more likely to be stopped and searched than whites. For Black and minority ethnic political representation to increase, good practice demands familiarity with the problems of these marginalised groups.



Racial diversity in our parliamentary representation matters if parliament is to have a true democratic legitimacy.

So what is the minority ethnic representation in the UK Parliament? Over 8% of MPs (House of Commons and members of the House of Lords) are from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. However, that compares with 15 % of the UK population. Almost half of these MPs are women.

## Barriers to representation

There is a simultaneous interaction of race gender and social class which shapes the opportunities to stand for and win office. Clearly the low representation of working-class people in all the political parties disproportionately impacts on black and minority ethnic people. Additionally, the 'insider strategy', the political and policy sphere of the employment market and often a path to the House of Commons, puts black minority ethnic people at a disadvantage. Black and minority ethnic people, because of the double bind of race and class, experience the obvious difficulties of tapping into those networks to present themselves as 'one of us' as the key to success.

Further, the dynamics of race and gender working together is exemplified

in a recent study which discussed gendered and raced dimensions of political exclusion:

*"The parties need to address the fact that white members on the selection panels whether male or female are reluctant to select Black women as candidates for MEP, MP or Local Councillors because Black women are not considered to meet the archetypal image of what constitutes a representative"*

Female respondent from 2014 study.

Black minority ethnic voters are vital for the electoral success of the Labour Party. Yet this variety of reasons remains a challenge for achieving an appropriate representation of Black and minority ethnic people at all political levels.

**The Black and minority ethnic population are a long way from enjoying the fruits of British democracy and it is time they gained the political representation they deserve.**

## References:

- Ethnic Minorities in Politics and Public Life*, Briefing Paper, Number SN01156, House of Commons Library, 4th March, 2017,
- Race and the 2015 General Election Part2 Voting patterns by ethnic group*, Runnymede Trust UK, 2015.
- The Shami Chakrabarti Inquiry, Report*, 30th June 2016.
- Black Women's Representation: Barriers to Accessing Politics*, Preliminary Report, C Wright, University of Nottingham, 2014.
- [*Black Political Representation*, Momentum Black Connexions, Wright, C et al, 2106, submission to The Shami Chakrabarti Inquiry.



# THE SOCIALIST CHALLENGE TODAY BY LEO PANITCH AND SAM GINDIN

**Book review by Dan Parks, CLPD EC**

**Panitch and Gindin argue that to shift ‘from protest to politics’ we need to take persuasion and education upwards from the activist base and embed it amongst our elected representatives.**

Ralph Miliband, Leo Panitch’s teacher and PhD supervisor at LSE and for 10 years his co-editor on *The Socialist Register*, wrote in his 1977 essay *The Future of Socialism in England* that

*“Even if it is argued that the Labour Left may come to assume a stronger – even a commanding – position in the counsels of the Labour Party, the Labour Right would still remain, deeply entrenched and utterly determined not to let go”.*

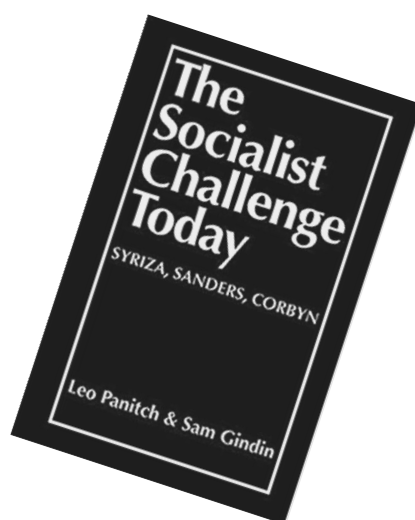
Miliband’s unquestionable and inevitable vindication, demonstrated by recent months especially, and by the experience of the Corbyn leadership in its entirety, provides the current Labour Left with important food for thought on how to proceed. *The Socialist Challenge Today* offers an invaluable contribution to that debate from a present-day perspective – and which takes into account the experiences of Syriza in Greece, Bernie Sanders in the US, and the last significant attempt to transform the Labour Party led by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

**Political education must be more than training for canvassing**

The kernel of Panitch and Gindin’s argument for re-energised socialist organising is a strategy of political education that encompasses more than simply canvassing training, and which can be effective at the level of both activists and elected representatives.

As Gindin argued in *Jacobin* magazine

in 2016, “the task for socialists is to initiate and sustain a determined, systematic drive to build popular new understandings and to develop its own popular capacities”. Similarly, Panitch argued in his 1985 essay *The Impasse of Social Democratic Politics* that “if the issue is in fact social transformation, the supersession of capitalism as a system, then the mobilisation of the working class’ potential range and power is the



key organisational and ideological condition”.

*The Socialist Challenge Today* expands on this within the context of the present-day Labour Party, specifically in highlighting the importance of “democratic socialist persuasion, education and mobilisation, not only so necessary for short-term electoral success but, in a longer-term perspective, for the party to become an active agent of new working-class formation and capacity development”.

**Taking education upwards**

Crucial to such persuasion and education is that it also takes place ‘upwards’ - not only within the activist base, but also amongst the elected representatives of the movement - to ensure we all “share a commitment to radical change and maintain such a commitment once subject to the

conservatising pressures of office”.

These ‘conservatising pressures’ certainly spill over into any engagement with parliamentarianism more generally and are undoubtedly at work within the Shadow Cabinet even while it remains in opposition; one centre-left shadow cabinet member remarked last year that reselection processes would mean MPs’ “attention being drawn away from Westminster” - as if that’s a bad thing.

On the contrary, as Tom Blackburn argued in *New Socialist* last year, such work “is not a diversion from the task at hand, but in fact has serious implications for the ability of a socialist government to govern”. Political education that extends beyond canvassing training and into capacity-building does not yet exist to the extent required and *The Socialist Challenge Today* offers a powerful argument for its urgent necessity.

The ‘shift from protest to politics’ provides the justification for the other key tenet of Panitch and Gindin’s argument: the necessity to develop policies which “advance, rather than close off, future socialist possibilities”, and the need for “profound transformation in party structures”. On the latter, they refer to the European social democratic parties of the 1980s, noting that “to produce the popular support needed to sustain a socialist government’s radical thrust, this depended on a sea-change in the organisational and ideological practices of parliamentary socialist parties themselves”.

Given the behaviour of large sections of the PLP over the course of Corbyn’s leadership, this remains wholly relevant in the context of today’s Labour Party. On policy, there is both praise and criticism for the Party’s current direction: Panitch and Gindin highlight the re-nationalisation proposals as the most promising aspect in their avoidance of the “replication of top-down corporate management in publicly owned enterprises by encouraging new forms of industrial democracy”, which would seek to empower workers and consumers in the running of these services, as laid out in the *Alternative Models of Ownership* report.

*...cont. on page 6*



## KEY VOTES IN PARTY ELECTIONS AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

### National Constitutional Committee (NCC) Constituency Section

Elected at Conference by delegates.  
Vote for candidates endorsed by the Centre Left Grassroots Alliance:

- Gary Heather (Islington North, Membership No. A006966)
- Jabran Hussain (Bradford West, Membership No. L0058388)
- Stephen Marks (Oxford East, Membership No. A241053)

### CAC Disability section

Vote for the candidate endorsed by the CLPD:

- Andy Thompson (Birmingham Ladywood, Membership No. L1197703)

## THE CENTRE-LEFT GRASSROOTS ALLIANCE

The Centre Left Grassroots Alliance (CLGA) is an alliance of Labour Party organisations that coordinate their activity in relation to Labour's internal party elections. In particular, it puts forward slates of progressive candidates for elections to the National Executive Committee (NEC), National Policy Forum (NPF), Conference Arrangements Committee (CAC) and National Constitutional Committee (NCC).

Central to the CLGA's approach is the pursuit of maximum unity in these elections, which consistently proves to be successful.

The CLGA has been in operation for 21 years and ensures that the party's membership is genuinely represented on Labour's national bodies.

To secure a Labour government it is important the party's national committees genuinely reflect the membership's overwhelming support for Jeremy Corbyn as Leader. The CLGA plays its part in trying to achieve this.

## SATURDAY'S PRIORITY BALLOT: USE YOUR VOTE, DON'T WASTE IT

CLPs must give guidance to their delegates about how to vote in this ballot. Above all, they must be made aware that there is no point whatsoever in wasting a vote by supporting any of the same ten resolutions supported by the unions in the ballot. Even if, as is likely, you support any or all of them.

The union ten are rightly guaranteed automatic inclusion for debate. To maximise the range of debate and to make sure issues important to CLPs get a hearing, CLP delegates must make their choices on different subjects from the union ten, thereby giving Conference the opportunity to debate ten subjects from the CLP section of the ballot- and hence supporting 20 subjects in all.

Delegates may come under illegitimate pressure from Party officials or parliamentarians to replicate the union ten, thereby restricting the number of issues. Don't be fooled by this undemocratic malpractice.



## BITEBACKS

*"The current Labour leadership is remarkable. It has not allowed itself to be bullied by the billionaire press."*

George Monbiot, Guardian, 3rd Jul '19.

## The Socialist Challenge Today ...cont. from page 5.

Despite this, it is noted that "there is a marked avoidance of the need to turn the whole financial system into a public utility", without which "socialist economic and social restructuring... cannot be realised". It is a salient point given the British economy's current dependence on financial services, and it is an issue which cannot be postponed much longer.

## More than a single term of government

*The Socialist Challenge Today* recognises that socialism will not be achieved in one term of government. It

provides a valuable outline of how, in preparation for those terms of government, socialists within the Labour Party must on the one hand "avoid the social democratisation of those now committed to transcending capitalism" and on the other, ensure that we measure the Corbyn leadership not by "how explicitly socialist its policies are, but rather the extent to which it problematises how to implement reform measures in such ways as to advance, rather than close off, future socialist possibilities".

The first task must be met with a strategy of political education that is effective both within the activist base

and its elected representatives, as well as the democratisation of party structures so as to hold elected representatives to account. The latter needs a programme to radically democratise the policy-making process. The difficulties of the last few months have proved how much work the left still has to do - work that can be guided by *The Socialist Challenge Today*.

**The very real opportunity of a socialist-led Labour government in the near future makes this work urgent and makes *The Socialist Challenge Today* required reading for everyone on the Labour Left.**

# LABOUR MUST SUPPORT THE PEOPLES OF KASHMIR

## Mo Azam, CLPD EC

The media and the political parties of Britain have by and large ignored the issue of Kashmir, first brought to the United Nations (of which Britain is a permanent member) in 1948 after Britain allowed the independence of the Indian Sub-continent.

### Unfinished business

The 14th and 15th August were the days of Independence for Pakistan and India respectively, but the future of the peoples of Kashmir was left unfinished. However, the United Nations, India, Pakistan, and Britain, along with the other United Nations members, promised the peoples of Kashmir that they would be allowed to have the right of self-determination.

Over 70 years later, after at least 3 wars between India and Pakistan, and thousands of people dead and many more displaced, we are no nearer to implementing those United Nations resolutions.

In July 2018 the United Nations published a report in which it stated

there are many human rights violations taking place in Kashmir on a daily basis - including murder, rape, disappearance, and violence.

While both India and Pakistan receive international financial assistance to deal with the poverty levels in these countries, they are now both nuclear powers and spend many £millions on arms and defence rather than to improve the lives of their residents. The British Parliament conducted an independent inquiry into the abuses of human rights in Kashmir by the All Party Parliamentary Kashmir Group (APPKG). The draft report released earlier this year also stated that human rights abuses are blatant in the Indian-held Kashmir.

British Kashmiris are calling on the British Government to take urgent action to bring about peace and prosperity in this region by whatever means possible. They are also calling on the Labour Party to adopt a clear policy on Kashmir that would give the community confidence that at least the Labour Party is prepared to help the Kashmiri people with their right of self-determination.

## British Kashmiris are looking to the Labour Party for support

There are 1.2 million British Kashmiris living in the UK and the majority support the Labour Party. Indeed there are many councillors, parliamentarians, and other elected members who are from Kashmir – it's estimated that British Kashmiris can determine who is elected in over 38 constituencies. British Kashmiris are hoping that a Jeremy Corbyn-led Labour Party will support their cause, the unfinished business of the British empire; theirs is a just cause, and they are not looking for favours but for their human rights – the right to determine their own future.

While they have witnessed the British Government go to war with many other countries who have failed to protect the human rights of their peoples, the Indian Government has been allowed to get away with blatant human rights abuses for many decades.

**The Labour Party claims to speak for the many and not the few; and champions equality, justice, and peace. Meanwhile the Kashmiris are denied all of these and are looking to the Labour Party to help bring about peace and prosperity in the region.**

## CLPD YOUTH FRINGE MEETING AT CONFERENCE

6 pm, Tuesday 24th September  
The Queens Hotel, Brighton  
Chair: Gemma Bolton  
Speakers: Cat Smith, Shadow Minister for Voter Engagement and Youth Affairs; Danny Filer on Labour Students; Lauren Townsend on organising young workers; Hasan Patel and Lily Madigan on the hope Labour offers to young people.

## 2020 CLPD AGM

Saturday 14th March 2020, 11:30 am  
Council House, Victoria Square,  
Birmingham, B1 1BB



## BITEBACKS

*"Real average incomes of the poorest fifth of the population contracted by 1.6% in the last financial year, while the average income of the richest fifth rose by 4.7%."*  
Observer, 3rd Mar '19.

## CLPD RALLY

6pm, Saturday 21st September  
The Queens Hotel, Brighton  
Chairs: Lizzy Ali & Gemma Bolton  
Speakers: Lloyd Russell-Moyle (welcome); Diane Abbott, MP; Seema Chandwani (CAC); Rachel Garnham (NEC/NPF); Margaret Greenwood, MP; Billy Hayes (CAC); Gary Heather (NCC); Stephen Marks (NCC); Tosh McDonald (ASLEF); Andy Thompson (CAC Disability Candidate).

## THE DELEGATES' GUIDE TO CONFERENCE

The CLPD/Momentum joint guide to Conference is a must read for delegates who want to understand the issues and procedures at this year's Conference. The Labour Party now also publishes its own guide and this and the CLPD/Momentum 2018 guide can both be accessed at [www.clpd.org.uk](http://www.clpd.org.uk). The 2019 guide is in progress at the time of printing and is expected to be accessible at [www.clpd.org.uk](http://www.clpd.org.uk); and at [www.grassrootslabour.net](http://www.grassrootslabour.net).

# CLPD YOUTH BRIEFING

**Jake Rubin, former Secretary of CLPD Youth, Youth Officer for Brent Central CLP, CLPD EC**

## CLPD Youth re-Launches

CLPD Youth was re-launched this February to establish a campaigning force of young members within the Labour Party committed to the democratisation of its youth and adult structures. Most of those who helped re-launch CLPD Youth joined Labour as a result of Corbyn's leadership victory in 2015 and were brought to the party with the hope of a new kind of politics, to harness the power and creativity of ordinary people – especially young people – to create a better society. Now Labour has 110,000 young members, more than the entire Tory party and the largest youth organisation in the whole of Europe.

This is something to celebrate, but it also raises questions about Young Labour, the body in which young members organise. Why is an organisation of this size, with so much energy and enthusiasm, starved of proper funds, poorly staffed, and unable to act as a properly autonomous wing of our party? Too often young members are treated simply as doorstep fodder and denied the responsibility, resources, and political education needed to empower and support them to run their own affairs.

Take one example: the current rule book states that Young Labour is only required to hold a conference "from time to time". Any youth conferences that occur have no official influence over party policy or its constitution. The Labour Party rightly argues we must invest in young people in Britain, but has failed to do so properly in its own youth organisation. If we want to change the lives of young people in this country and deliver a Labour government which will put young people at the heart of a different kind of politics, we must radically change the way Young Labour operates.

## Active campaigning

Since relaunching we've campaigned to address these issues – including a recruitment stall at June's festival; successful submission to the Democracy Review (more on this below); submitting a model conference motion to CLPs on ending no-fault housing evictions; speaking at events (including CLPD's pre-conference rally and Young Labour meetings across the country; and writing a daily column in CLPD's *Yellow Pages* to keep young delegates informed about the issues that matter.

We're proud of our work in the 6 months since CLPD Youth's re-launch, and since the publication of Katy Clark's Democracy Review there are now signs that Young Labour will receive the resources it needs to thrive.

However there is still a lot to do – not only to ensure the recommendations are implemented, but also to harness the reforms to transform Young Labour. This article outlines the key tasks facing young members who want to see this achieved.



## The Democracy Review and Young Labour

Katy Clark's Democracy Review covered many of the party's internal democratic processes, including the functioning of the party's youth wing, Young Labour, and in which its recommendations read like the CLPD Youth manifesto. They include:

- Constitutional autonomy for Young Labour, with its own rulebook and standing orders;
- Devolving administrative functions so Young Labour can conduct its own affairs in relation to its campaigns, including political education programmes;

## REMEMBER THE PARTY'S CODE OF CONDUCT

The NEC Code of Conduct for internal elections includes the following:

- Candidates are allowed to canvass delegates but must not distribute literature inside the conference hall. Contact with delegates must not be carried out in a manner likely to cause offence or be seen to be applying pressure to delegates.
- If one candidate is allowed to distribute literature at an official Labour Party event then that facility must be available to all candidates.
- Labour Party staff employed by the NEC shall not canvass or distribute literature on behalf of any candidate.

Please inform CLPD, NEC members, and the General Secretary of any infringements or possible infringements of the Code immediately.

- An annual grant from the central party over which it has control, potentially financed from the membership fees of its members;
- More emphasis on establishing regional groups, with AGM's in every region.

We were particularly happy that CLPD Youth's submission was recommended by the review, including our proposal to have an annual, sovereign Young Labour conference with the ability to submit a rule change and a policy motion to be debated at national conference the same year.

If implemented, our proposal will bring the Young Labour conference in line with Labour's Women's Conference and would mean that young Labour members aren't reliant on sympathetic CLPs to pass motions and rule changes that relate solely or mostly to young people or Young Labour – setting our own objectives for our communities and party, autonomously and democratically.

The NEC has been granted the power by the 2018 Conference to implement some of the proposals, which will then be ratified by this year's Conference.

...cont. on page 18.



# ANNUAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE – SO FAR, BUT NOT FAR ENOUGH....

**Teresa Clark and Jean Crocker, CLPD's Women's Collective**  
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We are working, as CLP reps on the Women's Conference Arrangements Committee (WCAC), for a democratic, inclusive, grassroots-led Annual Women's Conference (AWC).

AWC 2018 received all the speakers warmly, with rousing ovations for Jeremy Corbyn and Dawn Butler, and great cheers when Diane Abbott appeared in a video. We agreed unanimously to send a message of support to the march for Liverpool Women's Hospital that was being held the same day, while a CLPD fringe in the morning discussed a range of topics you will find in this publication.

In the last year we have encountered many of the issues that Pam Tatlow raises in her article elsewhere in this Campaign Briefing on the earlier Labour Women's Organisation. A policy-making AWC had been restored to the rules by the 2016 Labour Party Annual Conference (LPAC), though with no detail. Throughout the run-up to AWC 2018 we were told that 'it's about policy' was the only AWC rule. This did not mean things were more flexible – no rule tended to mean no action, and the single rule was used to argue against discussion at Conference on, for example, women's self-organisation and the Democracy Review. Nevertheless, at our first meeting in October 2017 we were successful in proposing that a motion should go from AWC 2018 to LPAC 2018.

## Making progress from 2017 to 2018 to 2019

AWC 2017 had had no motions, and no votes at the end of 'debates', and at one point it appeared that the settled resolve was for the same in 2018.

We argued for motions with votes as a key move towards democracy, and set out alternative timetables to show how a compositing process could work with a one-day conference. When the WCAC Chair contacted the NEC it became clear that we had their support for votes on motions, and the proposal was put into effect.

So at AWC 2018 women members spoke powerfully and often personally in support of motions on childcare, women's health and safety, abortion rights, and women and the economy. These were all passed and are now the policy of AWC. The last, on the terrible consequences of austerity, was voted through to LPAC, where it was wonderful to hear that the next motion would be "from the Women's Conference". This was the first time for many years and what we have been working for!

There was early NEC support for a two-day stand-alone AWC, which we could not get for 2018, but happened in Telford in February this year. It is expected that AWC will be in the spring from now on.

We wanted Constituency Labour Parties to have two delegates, to support them in their priority of increasing the representation of under-represented groups and communities. Again we could not get this for 2018, but the NEC sub-committee dealing with AWC proposed two delegates for 2019, where the second delegate must be BAME, LGBT and/or a Disabled woman, and this has been put in place.

## Successes in the Democracy Review

We encouraged women members to contribute to the Democracy Review and say what kind of AWC they wanted, and we made our own submission, based on what women members had said in the consultations we carried out. The Review has made excellent recommendations.

LPAC 2018 agreed that the NEC 'shall lay out detailed rules for National Annual Women's Conference and for women's representative structures... in line with the recommendations of the Democracy Review'.

We argued for these two recommendations to be put in place for AWC 2019 by the NEC, gaining the first but not the second:

- That two motions are sent through by AWC 2019 to LPAC 2019, one chosen by CLPs and one by unions.
- That Women's Forums / CLPs and affiliates will be able to choose to send a potential rule change to AWC, and that AWC can send one on to LPAC, where (if passed) it will become part of the rules – in line with Pam's call for Labour women to once again have the right to propose rule changes.

As Pam says, AWC is only part of the Labour Women's organisation that we need. There is much in the Democracy Review on organisation at constituency, regional, and national levels, entrusted to the NEC for this year, with rules due to come to LPAC 2019.

## Working closely with Disability Labour

We are keen to improve accessibility at AWC. We now have a staff member to whom we can pass on access concerns and progress has been made, eg a feedback questionnaire available in accessible formats; while Disability Labour activists went with Jean to assess the Telford venue.

**Please contact us about these or about any other suggestions for the future, and we will pass on any concerns women have about access.**



## BITEBACKS

*"Homelessness - Britain's Shame. We are seeing the consequences of a government, which has stopped caring. The safety net, which should be there, has been torn to shreds. You could point to Universal Credit, or the shortage of accommodation, or the lack of drug treatment services or the paucity of mental health provision."*  
 Editorial, Daily Mirror, 7th Feb '19.

# TEL'S TALES

## Mushy Peas – Mandelson speaks out

Lord Mandelson, in an interview by the Sunday Times, made the very valid point that, after 2008, there should have been “a more fundamental reinvention of the financial system”. Lord M also insisted on using the interview to resolve the Mushy Peas imbroglio. He insisted he could never mistake mushy peas for guacamole. Rather, it was a Neil Kinnock joke. Lord M put it on the record, once and for all: “I know exactly what a mushy pea is”.

## The UK Economy since the 2008 Crisis – If only our Gordon had won in 2010!

In 2016 the ‘experts’ were proved wrong, yet again – as my old mate, Rod Bickerstaffe always said, “‘X’ is an unknown quantity and a ‘spurt’ is a drip under pressure”. The Brexit vote did not lead to an economic Armageddon. But households are spending more than they are earning for the first time in 30 years. There has been no ‘march of the makers’. No coherent ‘industrial strategy’. Only unrelenting and demoralising austerity. Under the Tories it has been a lost decade. From 2008 to 2010 Gordon was putting together a growth and equality strategy, but it was binned immediately Osborne became Chancellor.



*"When Eton and Winchester were established, some 600 years ago, it was written into their charters that all pupils would be poor scholars taken from the community."*

Robert Verkaik, Guardian, 30th Apr '19.

## Polls apart

A few months ago Trump's popularity rating across the whole of the US was estimated at 37% or lower. But his popularity in ‘Trump Country’ was as

much as 88%. The reality of ‘Two USAs’ was starkly brought home to a journalist on the Sunday Times. In Washington DC his partner was given a birthday present of flowers by their neighbour. But in ‘Trump Country’ one gift was free rental at a gun club of an automatic rifle.

## 95% say ‘no’ to PR

In Italy in 1991 a national referendum was held in which the population was asked whether they wanted to end the proportional electoral system in Senate elections. It was generally believed that this would be a big step towards ending political instability. More than 95% voted ‘yes’ to the change, in favour of a majority system. Unfortunately the Government did not respect the decision of the voters. Instead, a hybrid electoral mechanism was introduced, that did little to solve the problem of instability.

## Then and now

Some 25 years ago the youngish Alan Milburn decried the Major Government for “more trading in healthcare, and more PR specialists and management consultants ... looking to make a mint”.

Surprise, surprise; Alan Milburn is now employed at PwC as... you’ve guessed it! One of those very same greedy consultants.

## Without Comment

In 2017 the nominations from all the CLPs supporting the progressive CLGA slate of 3 for the NEC put Yasmine Dar, of Kashmiri heritage, at the top of the three with 206 nominations, and the white male at the bottom with 182. By contrast, the nominations from all the CLPs supporting the slate of the hard right Labour First and so-called ‘Progress’ put their white male at the top of the three with 71 nominations and the candidate of Punjabi heritage at the bottom with 55 nominations.

## Sally's progress

In the late ‘80s Sally Morgan was an enthusiastic apparatchik at Labour's HQ and closely linked to the Labour Coordinating Committee. The LCC was

created by Bennites, but became ever more right-wing. By the early ‘90s it was proto-Blairite. Once Blair was leader Sally transferred to his office. Throughout the Dark Ages of Blairism Sally was a mainstay. Her reward – becoming Lady Morgan. Lady M then followed the all-too-common Blairite path into private company boardrooms. But it was a tale of woe. Lady M's meal-ticket, Southern Cross Healthcare, went bust. Undeterred, Sally joined the board of Carillion in July 2017. Within a few months that also went bust.

I am now crowd-funding to sponsor Sally to join the boards of Labour First and the misnamed ‘Progress’.



"The Institute for Fiscal Studies has forecast that almost four in ten children will be living in relative poverty by 2022, as a result of planned government policies. Child poverty rates fell between 1997 and 2010, as a result of Labour government policies." Editorial, Observer, 31st March '19.

## The “Gang of 12”

*(Editor's note: this was written in 2018, but we knew what was coming).*

It is not only the Bloomsbury set that possessed a Sussex hideaway. The Daily Express has revealed that the Blairite rump also have the use of a posh farmhouse in the Weald. But, whereas the Bloomers swapped poems and partners, the Blairites swapped nefarious plots and plans.

The following are some of the views expressed by Gang members, as recorded by the Express:

- To use the “group of moderate Labour MPs” to prevent JC becoming Prime Minister, if Labour wins the next General Election.
- “We will break away and either form a separate Labour Party within Parliament or form a new party”
- “There are [Remainer] Conservatives, as well as Lib Dem MPs, who are interested in joining us if we do form a new party because of Brexit.”

# DISABLED ACTIVISTS IN THE LABOUR PARTY

**Andy Thompson,  
Birmingham (Ladywood)  
CLP, Unite National  
Disabled Members  
Committee, CLPD EC**

Prior to 15th May 2016 I suffered from the delusion most progressive non-disabled people are under: That I was on the side of those disabled by society's approach to their impairments, and understood their concerns and difficulties. Then I had a stroke.

As a result of this, after 4 months, I was discharged from hospital: not into my previous home which I could no longer manage, but across the border. Unable to walk more than a few yards and with minimal use of my right arm, I had time - lots of it. I had used it in hospital to campaign on social media, first in the Brexit campaign and then against the Chicken Coup. When I wasn't having political conversations with the staff, patients, and visitors, I was posting, tweeting, and writing emergency motions with my left thumb on my phone.

## A party I barely recognised

When I came out it was into a party I barely recognised: I hadn't been active since I resigned in 1994, despite re-joining in 2010. However, now I was going to be able to get more involved, or so I thought. Fellow Momentum and disabled activists told me I was having a

laugh. Disabled activists told of meetings without agenda or minutes beforehand; of meetings in inaccessible venues; and of members who had difficulty attending meetings in the evening due to longstanding illness or the carer's timetable.

My CLP had the dubious distinction of being in 'Special Measures'. In addition, along with all Birmingham CLPs, it had a bastardised hybrid of a constitution that still survives, giving huge power to affiliates and incumbent officers, councillors, and the MP. My constituency, having become difficult to join, and pointless staying, has so few members that it can't afford to have meetings from one AGM to the next.

So, in the fortunate position of being on my union branch exec, I got delegated and ended up on the Executive.

The meetings, at 19:30, after a wait to get in, in the Council House up a lift I have been trapped in, at least have some paperwork in advance.



**Nothing about us, without us**

The above illustrates from one perspective some of the problems faced by our disabled members and prospective members. Disability Labour as a group and as individuals has, with much adversity, joined with others to campaign vigorously for better understanding and facilitation on a number of fronts.

## Conforming to the Equality Act

The Party is regularly in breach of the Equality Act. The Act requires proactive reasonable adjustments to be in place

## USEFUL LINKS

- [twitter.com/clpd\\_labour](https://twitter.com/clpd_labour)
- [facebook.com/clpd.labour](https://facebook.com/clpd.labour)
- [clpd.org.uk](https://clpd.org.uk)
- [grassrootslabour.net](https://grassrootslabour.net)
- [twitter.com/PeterWillsman](https://twitter.com/PeterWillsman)

before a ward, CLP, Committee, etc finds itself with a member with visual, hearing, speech, dexterity, mobility, neurodiversity-related or long-term illness-related impairments.

So papers should be able to be circulated in advance so they can be accessible in the meeting to those with visual impairment or dyslexia, and that those unable to speak may prepare their intervention in typewritten or spoken form.

A hearing loop should be available if the room does not have one.

Meetings should be held at accessible times, in truly accessible venues, maybe split with online discussion, and participation enabling house-bound members to be involved.

Frequent breaks should be had to cater for the neurodiverse or those with bladder issues.

Selection processes should not freeze out those in wheelchairs by demanding door knocking as an activity, or expecting the prospective mobility- or visually-impaired to be subject to a stand-up crowded 'meet and greet', or alternatively miss out on the opportunity afforded to their fellow hopefuls.

Disabled people are the least effectively represented in the UK, with less than 1% of MPs when we are 20% of the adult population. Recognising how we are frozen out is the first step in helping us win our inclusion.

The Democracy Review has some great proposals to improve the engagement of disabled people. The handbook at

<http://disabilityequalityactlabour.org> gives CLPs and other party bodies great advice. **Please read and support both.**



*"Jo Swinson... when part of the [Lib-Dem/ Tory] Coalition government, voted against a ban on fracking, voted for the bedroom tax, voted for raising student tuition fees, voted over 20 times to cut welfare spending and voted to back a potential £100bn renewal of Trident."*

Jack Fawbert, letter, Guardian, 24th Jul '19.

# YET ANOTHER THREAT TO THE 'GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT'

**By Valerie Veness,  
Thanet South CLP**

The 'Good Friday Agreement' (GFA) peace process in Ireland is hanging by a thread following the DUP signing their rotten deal with the Tories. However, it also faces a new threat from within our own party.

The original ceasefire and on-going negotiations were based on three strands:

- The declaration that the British Government had "no selfish interests in the island of Ireland";
- The establishment of an "equality of esteem" system that effectively dealt with the issues from the civil rights movements of the '60s and '70s;
- The issues of prisoners in British and Irish jails.

On the last issue, in the 1990s I worked for Jeremy Corbyn and assisted him in all his visits to prisons and prisoners on both sides of the Irish Sea. When Mo Mowlam got the 'Northern Ireland' brief, this issue started to be resolved, and eventually all the intricate and difficult cases started to be settled - but not before we needed the Irish Republic to change some of its legal provisions! It took a further ten years to get all the cases settled and for a full agreement.

The 'equality of esteem' issue eventually saw the establishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly - something that republicans were initially sceptical about as they did not want any re-run of a Stormont regime that was a "protestant parliament for a protestant people" that had characterised the first fifty years of the Northern statelet. The 'power sharing' structures on their own would not have addressed these issues without a willingness of all the major political parties to work together - and for a time that actually happened.

The other issue, ironically, is the one that certain elements in the Labour Party now seem intent on undermining.

Whilst Thatcher was Prime Minister there was no chance of any such declaration - she was an avowed unionist and imperialist.

After her demise in 1991 things started to change though. Using the "Only Nixon could go to China" analogy, Henry Brooke, a Tory Minister with impeccable Ulster Unionist credentials, suddenly made the public declaration of "no selfish interest" in response to the Hume / Adams talks and gained the first IRA ceasefire. Without this declaration, there would have been no subsequent negotiations and certainly no GFA. A Westminster Government determined to hang on to the 'Six Counties', come what may, would have made any progress impossible.

The final agreements allow for a border poll and a democratic vote if sufficient parties or sections of the population wish it. Sinn Fein has now made clear that ideally it would like such a vote in the next three or four years. The demographics of the 'North' are changing rapidly and the last general election saw a unionist:nationalist divide of 51:49%. A democratic vote for a united Ireland is now a real possibility. Most of Sinn Fein's new leadership have made this call repeatedly.

## **Labour organising in the Six Counties would be a disaster**

Yet certain elements in the Labour Party over here now think it's a good time to resurrect the hoary old chestnut of the Labour Party organising in the Six Counties. (We have a number of branches for "overseas or international members" - including one in the North of Ireland, but they don't contest elections). Such a move would be a disaster - announcing that Labour saw a division of Ireland as a permanent feature and going against many past Conference decisions of supporting 'Unity by Consent'. Such an organisation would be an 'Orange Labour Party' and would be vigorously

opposed: not just by Sinn Fein but also by the SDLP (supposedly Labour's sister party there). Even under Wilson, Callaghan, Foot, and Kinnock there was never any attempt to pitch candidates into the troubled province, and people like Clive Soley and Kevin McNamara were stout adherents to the 'united Ireland by consent' school - no matter how far away that then seemed to everyone.

Previous attempts to stand candidates have been gross failures, but this time it is slightly different in that the republican and nationalist groups are relying on Labour as allies - and we are led by someone they trust and have worked with closely in the past. Jeremy Corbyn is clear he wants the 'power sharing executive' up and running again. Theresa May's dalliance with the DUP has put great obstacles in the way of reviving the Assembly and re-invigorating the 'peace process' - it would be a total calamity if Labour were to ape this. Jeremy Corbyn has also made it clear he is totally opposed to this suggestion of standing candidates in the Six Counties and is happy that his opposition is made public.

## **Reuniting a divided land**

The Six Counties have been used as a convenient football in a lot of the Brexit toing-and-froing but surely the long term solution is to re-unite a divided land, which can then have whatever relationship it wants with the rest of the UK, the EU, or anyone else? Activists have woken up to the dangers posed by this suggestion of Labour standing candidates, and to its credit Momentum has already made clear it will not organise or support candidates over there, but we need the NEC and the wider party to adopt this principled position as well.

It is vital all active Labour Party members and trades unionists exert the maximum pressure on NEC members, MPs, and all sections of the party to see this zombie suggestion of organising in the Six Counties is re-interred as swiftly as possible.

**CLPD has a proud record in rallying our party to reject changes damaging to the wider struggle and this time we need to make sure we add our voices again.**



# THE VOTER IDENTIFICATION SCHEME IN BROMLEY: A CASE STUDY

**Dermot Mckibbin,  
Beckenham CLP**

Tory-dominated Bromley Council was a pilot authority for the voter identification scheme for last year's local elections, as one of the five pilot schemes (the others were in Woking, Gosport, Watford, and Swindon). The rationale for the scheme was to deal with the possibility of electoral fraud, although both the council and the electoral commission admitted there had never been any electoral fraud in the borough.



The decision to join the scheme was taken by the Council's Chief Executive who is also the Chief Returning Officer. Unlike in Watford, there was no consultation with local political parties or with the public as to how the scheme would operate.

Bromley opted for a system whereby voters had to show either a particular form of photographic identification or a particular alternative form of alternative identification. Or a potential voter could apply to the council for a certificate of identification. All postal and proxy votes are exempt from the requirements for the scheme.

## Numerous problems

There were numerous problems with the scheme:

- According to the BBC website that relied on information supplied by the council, 154 voters were unable to vote and 400 had to return later with the correct identification. However,

the council has not published any detailed information about the impact of the scheme to facilitate public scrutiny. The council is very secretive about the scheme.

- Labour lost 1 seat by 20 votes and the Lib Dems lost another seat by less than 50 votes. It is entirely possible that this scheme cost Labour this seat on the council.
- The council had to be lobbied to publish their equality impact assessment ([http://www.bromley.gov.uk/downloads/file/3387/voter\\_id\\_pilot\\_-\\_eia](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/downloads/file/3387/voter_id_pilot_-_eia)) This assessment did not agree that the 8% of the borough's population who don't speak English would be adversely affected by the scheme. However, following the intervention by a Labour councillor at the General Purposes and Licensing Committee meeting on 8th February 2018 it was agreed that translations would be provided. There was no evidence that this decision was carried out. American studies have revealed that ethnic minority groups suffer disproportionately from voter identification schemes.
- Nor did the council agree that disabled people with mobility problems would need help with a postal vote.
- The council accepted that some elderly people in the borough would not have the necessary identification. They agreed to promote the use of a



## BITEBACKS

*"Median household wealth for the top 10% richest in Britain has leapt from "752,900 to "1,039,400, while those in the bottom 10% have seen theirs slump from "54,900 to "31,900 since the Tories took power."*

Richard Partington, Guardian 17th Dec '18.

promote the use of a postal vote for this group. This did not happen.

- The council agreed that voters who changed their sex would be adversely affected. It was agreed that appropriate publicity would be provided. Again, there is no evidence that this happened in practice.
- The publicity that was paid for by central government gave the misleading impression that you could only vote in person at the election. It did not mention the use of postal or proxy votes.
- The treasurer of Beckenham CLP was told initially by the polling clerk that he could not vote. When he challenged them, the clerk relented. We do not know how many voters lacked the confidence to challenge council staff. Nor do we know how many people did not vote as they had no identification at all.
- In one Tory marginal ward, 28% of the votes cast were postal votes. All Tory election leaflets promoted postal voting. There was no co-ordinated borough-wide campaign by Labour to encourage postal voting. Nor was there any co-ordinated campaign to try to stop the scheme.

It is therefore clear the scheme disadvantages Labour, especially among non-English speakers, Black and ethnic minorities, the mobility-impaired, the elderly, and the wider voter population without the designated identification or the assertiveness to demand their rights.

**We now need to devise a coherent strategy to stop this scheme being rolled out nationally.**



## BITEBACKS

*"When Theresa May promulgated the policy in 2013, she said she wanted to create 'a really hostile environment'. The standard formulation does not convey the full nastiness of her policy."*

Dr Richard Carter, Guardian, 20th Sep '18.



# RESTORING THE LABOUR WOMEN'S ORGANISATION – WHERE NEXT

**Pam Tatlow, Chair LWAC 1983-2004, Richmond Park CLP**

When the 1918 Representation of the People Act extended the franchise to some (but not all) women, Arthur Henderson, the General Secretary of the Labour Party, lost little time in ensuring that amendments to the Labour Party's rulebook were accepted. As a result, the independent Labour Women's Organisation which had existed, was incorporated into the Party's organisation, but without the same status as the constituency parties and trade unions affiliated to Labour. For Arthur and his colleagues, the prospect of women's votes and independent Labour women were too much of a threat to the party machine.

For their part, Labour women continued to campaign through Women's Sections in their communities and in local and general elections. Not that this made much difference to those chosen to represent Labour in local councils and in parliament, who remained mainly men – a scenario that remained undisturbed for decades. Notoriously, after Labour's defeat in the 1979 general election, the number of Labour women elected as MPs fell to 11.

## Democratising the Party

As the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD) got into its stride in

the early 1980s, proposing rule changes to democratise the party and ensure that there was an opportunity for its members to have a say in the re-selection of Labour MPs, so did the Labour Women's Action Committee (LWAC). LWAC's work was key to the 12-year struggle to improve the representation of Labour women – eventually achieved by rule changes that provided for all-women shortlists.

LWAC was active in other ways – working with TU women to ensure that Labour Women's Conference was representative of all parts of the Party; promoting policies for a Labour Government and rule changes to ensure the Women's Conference elected the NEC Women's Committee; and supporting local Women's Sections and Councils, Regional Women's Conferences, and Women's Conferences in Scotland and Wales. The Women's Organisation in its various forms was part and parcel of the rule book, with the power to send resolutions and policy proposals to regional and national boards, to constituencies, and to the Annual Women's Conference – and from there to the Annual Conference itself.

## Two steps back under New Labour

As with much else in terms of Party democracy, this proved too much for New Labour. Leading lights rightly perceived the Women's Organisation as a threat to a top-down approach to policy. They were also known to call into question parliamentary selections where the 'wrong woman' was selected. In spite of favourable legal advice, the then NEC failed to appeal an employment tribunal ruling that all-women shortlists breached the Sex Discrimination Act, thus undermining the selection of Labour women (and especially those on the left) prior to the 1997 election.

Extraordinary moves were adopted to mute the voices of Labour women who



## BITEBACKS

*"The recent report by the Media Reform Coalition examining coverage of Labour's revised code of conduct on anti-Semitism examined over 250 articles and broadcast news segments, and found over 90 examples of misleading or inaccurate reporting... The researchers conclude these were 'systematic reporting failures' that served to weaken the Labour leadership and bolster its opponents within and outside of the Party."*  
Letter from Noam Chomsky, Yanis Varoufakis, Ken Loach, Brian Eno, and 23 others, Guardian 1st Oct '18

might object to what was going on. LWAC's fringe meetings for women delegates on the Saturday afternoon prior to Annual Conference, which had provided a forum for women and attracted speakers like Diane Abbott MP, were excluded from the Conference events and the fringe programme – and this in the day when promotion via social media was non-existent.

Even more significantly, the Labour Women's Conference and the Women's Organisation were dealt hammer-blows by changes to the rulebook which effectively disbanded the Women's Organisation at every level.

## Moving forward from the 2018 Women's Conference

This is why Labour women need to see the 2018 Women's' Conference as a victory – but only as the first step towards re-creating a vibrant and powerful Women's Organisation at constituency, regional, and national level.

In addition to policy, Labour women must now have the power to propose, discuss and agree the rule changes required to ensure that the Arthur Henderson view of Labour women is once again consigned to the history books.

**As Labour women, we deserve nothing less.**

## CLPD CONFERENCE DELEGATE FORM

If you're a delegate to the 2019 Conference please register on the CLPD website at [www.clpd.org.uk](http://www.clpd.org.uk) and encourage other delegates to do the same so we can get in touch with attendees who support democracy in the Labour Party and Jeremy's progressive anti-austerity agenda.

# A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN BY VIRGINIA WOOLF

**Book review by Laura Davison, Folkestone and Hythe CLP**

Written over 90 years ago, Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* has not withered with age. It is based on two lectures about *Women and Fiction* which Virginia gave to the all-women Newnham and Girton Colleges at Cambridge, and describes the process of composing the talks themselves.

Woolf was writing in a period when horrendous views were held about eugenics and her own words have rightly been criticised in this respect. Setting this aside if we can, in these lectures she details the physical, economic, social, and legal barriers to creativity which women face and have faced, in this case to writing. Wandering through an Oxbridge college contemplating her own lectures Virginia herself had doors shut in her face:

*"I was actually at the door which leads into the library itself ... instantly there issued, like a guardian angel barring the way with a flutter of black gown ... a gentleman who regretted in a low voice that ladies are only admitted to the library if accompanied by a Fellow of the college..."*

and her path blocked:

*"I found myself walking with extreme rapidity across a grass plot. Instantly a man's figure rose to intercept me ... His face expressed horror and indignation ... This was the turf; there was the path. Only the Fellows and Scholars are allowed here; the gravel is the place for me."*

It's the barriers Virginia describes that makes *A Room of One's Own* seem so relevant now. She argues that to write, a woman needs enough reliable money so she doesn't have to worry, and time that won't be constantly interrupted by other pressures. These are factors which go a long way to explain the lack

of female working-class voices in journalism to this day. We know that the impact of 21st century cuts has fallen most heavily on women: women who are carers, or who work in precarious, low paid, non-unionised jobs.

Women face huge barriers, juggling everything all the time. The impact of insecurity like this is starkly expressed:

*"What still remains with me ... was the poison of fear and bitterness which those days bred in me ... all this became like a rust eating away the bloom of the spring, destroying the tree at its heart."*



Virginia was lucky and went on to find security in the form of a reliable income which in turn gave her "a view of the open sky". And as she delivered her lectures, she was trying to break down the barriers faced by the young women she was speaking to, encouraging them to write all kinds of things about all kinds of topics.

For me her lectures speak from 90 years ago to the core spirit of our Labour party now: to remove barriers in people's lives, so everybody can create in their own unique way, so people's skills and talents can be harnessed for the greater good and happiness of all of us, and – crucially – that people need the security and opportunity to fulfill that.



## BITEBACKS

*"Bitter experience teaches that high protective tariffs, whatever profits they may confer on capital... are to the poor and the poorest of the poor an accursed engine of robbery and oppression."*

Winston Churchill (1903), Sunday Times, 23rd Sep '18.

## SATURDAY'S PRIORITY BALLOT: USE YOUR VOTE, DON'T WASTE IT

CLPs must give guidance to their delegates about how to vote in this ballot. Above all, they must be made aware that there is no point whatsoever in wasting a vote by supporting any of the same ten resolutions supported by the unions in the ballot. Even if, as is likely, you support any or all of them.

The union ten are rightly guaranteed automatic inclusion for debate. To maximise the range of debate and to make sure issues important to CLPs get a hearing, CLP delegates must make their choices on different subjects from the union ten, thereby giving Conference the opportunity to debate ten subjects from the CLP section of the ballot- and hence supporting 20 subjects in all. Delegates may come under illegitimate pressure from Party officials or parliamentarians to replicate the union ten, thereby restricting the number of issues. Don't be fooled by this undemocratic malpractice.



## BITEBACKS

*"The far-right Sweden Democrats have slowly increased their share of the vote. Proportional Representation would probably have given UKIP the chance to make similar gains."*

Letter from a long-term advocate of PR, who is having second thoughts (lots of them), Guardian, 12th Sep '18.

# THE POLITICS OF MENTAL HEALTH: THE PATHOLOGISING OF EVERYDAY LIFE

**Keith Edwards, East Devon CLP**

## The lived experience

Mental health/illness has become a prominent issue in recent months with concerns expressed regarding finance, availability of services, and stigma. The significance of mental health and mental illness as a theme of politics has developed steadily since the 1960s' interest in social construction and control of deviance. R.D. Laing challenged much of the thinking of the day by taking the expressed feelings of the individual person as valid descriptions of lived experience rather than simply as symptoms of some separate or underlying disorder. Today one cannot possibly think of mental ill-health without considering issues of class, gender, ethnicity, poverty, and other social determinates of health.

Our mental health is affected by the circumstances into which we are born, our social situation, environment, economic / financial position, culture, politics, and how we adapt to these



factors. Mental health is both a part of, and intrinsically bound up with, our overall well-being and being mentally healthy is about being in the driving seat as we travel the bumpy road of life.

People have different personalities and the diversity of human responses will vary and depend on an individual's resources, circumstances, experiences and abilities, with both internal and external factors having to be taken into consideration. One's sense of wellbeing doesn't stay the same, and can change in response to circumstances and stages of life. We probably all agree that children and young people have a better capacity to develop and flourish if they have 'good' mental health.

If children and young people are disadvantaged, suffer poverty of circumstances, experience problematic life events or difficulties that are not picked up at an early age (like bullying and physical or sexual abuse), these will impact on their development: affecting their ability to reach their full potential or – worse – can lead to debilitating mental health problems.

## 'What is wrong' vs 'what has happened'

When assessing peoples' mental health, the question is invariably 'what is wrong with you' and not 'what has happened to you', the idea that 'the problem' lies within the individual.

There is usually less discussion about what has happened regarding work, housing, finances, poverty, racism or sexism, and how these factors may have affected their mental health. Take housing for example: how does living in cramped and unpleasant conditions, high rents, slum landlords, being unable to save for a deposit for a home, short-term contracts, and fear of eviction impact upon health?

Similarly, with poorly paid work, zero-hour contracts, uncertainty of work, stressful working conditions, long hours or even having two jobs. All these factors can lead to stress, anxiety, insecurity, depression, self-neglect, feelings of hopelessness and/or suicidal thoughts that can result in psychological damage.

As the effects of austerity measures hit harder, some people will never feel recovered living under intolerable social and economic pressures.

## A focus on prescribing drugs

Psychiatric drugs are increasingly being prescribed for all sorts of ailments, and drugs are sold as a 'solution' for everyday problems. Economic, social, or political restraints like housing or job insecurity that can cause mental health problems are seldom the key focus of interventions or adequately addressed. Being mentally healthy is part of a social process and linked to wider political interests and struggles. Only by focusing on an individual's psychological feelings to the relationships and structure of society can we begin to address the question of 'what has happened' rather than 'what is wrong with one'.

Social problems are too often framed as individual illnesses and our current system creates and uses psychiatric diagnosis in denying many social causes of mental ill health.

**Our current system creates the conditions that lead to dysfunctional behaviour and it is unquestionably time for change.**



*"The fact that austerity has never worked, matters not. It was a unique political opportunity for the Right to reduce the size of the state, never mind the social and economic consequences. The Government did a reverse Robin Hood, taking from the poor and giving to the rich."*

Professor David Blanchflower, former rate-setter at the Bank of England, Guardian, 13th Mar '19.

# POPULAR RULE CHANGES SHOULD NOT HAVE TO WAIT THREE YEARS

The 'three-year rule' restricts Conference from debating important rule change proposals which could significantly improve the party's functioning. It is repeatedly used to prevent important rule change debates - regardless of how much the changes are desired by the members or trade union affiliates. In reality, this means an unsuccessful proposal for a rule change may need to wait four years before it's next considered.

It should be noted that the NEC is not subject to the three-year rule. CLPD merely seeks to extend that same right to the CLPs and affiliates if they can demonstrate their proposal has a clear minimum level of support.

## The model resolution

CLPD therefore supports the following model resolution:

"The Labour Party Rule Book 2019 Chapter 3 Party Conference, Clause III Procedural rules for Party Conference, Conference Rule 2 – agenda, subsection H reads as follows: 'When Party conference has made a decision on a constitutional amendment, no resolution to amend the constitution or rules of the Party having the same or a similar primary objective shall appear on the agenda of the three following annual party conferences, except such resolutions to amend the constitution and rules that are in the opinion of the NEC of immediate importance.' "Amendment: Add at end: 'or when 5 or more identical resolutions to amend the constitution or rules have been submitted.'"

This rule change would allow constitutional amendments which can demonstrate they have support from five



CLPs/affiliates to be debated in the year they are submitted. Conference would only re-discuss a change to the rules (with a similar or same primary objective) if that minimum number of organisations submit it.

## Beware falling victim to the current 'three-year rule'

In the meantime, delegates are reminded that any rule change proposals that fail to win Conference agreement will fall victim to this rule for the next four years. Make sure you check CLPD's daily *Yellow Pages* for the latest recommendations on whether to remit.

## CLPD CAMPAIGNS FOR:

- A real policy-making Annual Conference;
- An effective and accountable NEC;
- The defence of the Trade Union link;
- More progressive Labour candidates for elected office who are women, BAME, or disabled people; and, generally, for an increase in candidates with a working-class background, to counteract the current unacceptable under-representation;
- A local electoral college for choosing leaders of council Labour Groups;
- An internal Party ombudsperson;
- A clear jobs and growth policy in sharp opposition to the Tories and austerity.

## DON'T BE BAMBOOZLED

*Important and urgent advice for all delegates to Labour Conference 2019 and for Labour Party members able to brief their CLP delegate(s) in advance.*

To ensure that Conference is allowed to debate the full twenty contemporary motions that Party rules permit, it is vital that CLP delegates vote for ten different resolutions in addition to the ten supported by the trade unions. Union-supported resolutions will obtain enough votes to be debated anyway. If CLP delegates support them that will pile up useless votes. The result will be that fewer than ten resolutions from

CLPs will be debated as they won't get sufficient support.

Resolutions being supported by the unions will be notified in the CLPD [*Yellow Pages* newsletter, distributed outside Conference before the first session, and at the CLPD pre-conference rally and delegate briefing at The Queens Hotel on Saturday 21st September from 6pm.

**BEWARE:** In the past, party staff have exacerbated this problem by informing regional pre-Conference delegates' meetings that they should support resolutions from the unions, which means CLP votes are wasted.



## CLPD YOUTH BRIEFING

*...cont. from page 8.*

CLPD Youth has been putting pressure on the NEC to make good on these promises - because any glance at the party's history tells us that just because it's in a NEC report doesn't mean it will be put in place.

And even if these reforms are implemented there is still much to do to transform Young Labour into a socialist youth organisation fit for the 21st century. Our task is not just about securing the resources the democracy review promised but actually using them effectively to build a vibrant youth wing for the party's 110,000 young members.

### Building CLPD Youth

For CLPD Youth, this will include organising for the next Young Labour conference. It will be the first time that young members will be able use their

own organisation, Young Labour, to meaningfully influence the party's policy and constitution.

We are preparing motions and rule changes that matter to young members, working with Momentum to organise left delegates.

We will also hold a fringe event for delegates to discuss our ideas for Young Labour and for the wider party.

Then comes the hard work of helping young members to build Young Labour groups in their CLPs and regions. This requires old-fashioned grassroots organisation: door-knocking and phone-banking young members to get involved in running community campaigns; building links with and campaigning on issues that face young people in the workplace; mobilising the youth vote during elections; and running political education programmes to nurture a new generation of socialists.

To democratise British society and the British state, we must first democratise the Labour Party. Similarly, if we want to transform the lives and futures of young people in Britain we must transform how our youth wing Young Labour operates.

**Over the next year this will start to happen – and at CLPD Youth we will be at the forefront of making it so.**

### Join CLPD Youth for £3.

Go to: [www.clpd.org.uk](http://www.clpd.org.uk)

Follow our twitter (@CLPD\_Youth)

and like our Facebook page **CLPD Youth**.

if you're interested in getting involved with CLPD Youth, or know anyone who would be, contact:

[clpdyouth@gmail.com](mailto:clpdyouth@gmail.com)

# LABOUR'S PRIORITY – STOPPING A TORY 'NO DEAL' OR 'HARD-BREXIT'

There is a grave danger of a damaging 'No Deal Brexit' or 'Hard Brexit', under the new Tory Prime Minister, that would lead to job losses, reductions in living standards and workers' rights, plus cuts in environmental and consumer protections, and a harmful trade deal with the US that would threaten the NHS.

We congratulate our party leadership and the PLP for voting in Parliament: to

stop Theresa May's deal; against a No Deal exit; for a Customs Union; for alignment with the Single Market; and for a public vote – in line with the policy agreed by the 2018 Labour Party Conference.

### The model resolution

CLPD therefore supports the following model resolution:

"Conference this year reaffirms its commitment to an approach that prioritises the defence of people's living standards and jobs; the maintenance of access to EU markets, with at a minimum a customs union; the protection of people's rights; and no hard border on the island of Ireland.

"Conference therefore agrees that the party must continue to fight to block a No Deal Brexit/Hard-Brexit, using all necessary and available means, including fighting for a general election and supporting a public vote on the terms of any departure from the European Union.

"Conference therefore agrees that the party must continue to fight to block a No Deal Brexit/Hard-Brexit, using all necessary and available means, including fighting for a general election and supporting a public vote on the terms of any departure from the European Union.

"Whatever Brexit plan the Tory leader comes up with, after three long years of failure they should have the confidence to go back to the people on a deal agreed by parliament. At all times Labour will seek to overcome division and build maximum consensus around policies for the many, not the few."

At the time of going to press, this continues to be a rapidly-changing issue. **CLPD's guidance for delegates is therefore to support the recommendations of the party leadership.**





# SCOTTISH LABOUR WOMEN ORGANISING

**Ann Henderson, CLP representative on Labour's NEC**

ahendersonlab@gmail.com



During the Scottish Labour Leadership election campaign in the autumn of 2017, both candidates were asked to pledge their support for several demands for women's representation. These included increasing women candidate numbers through All Women Shortlists (AWS); reserving a seat on the Scottish Labour Executive Committee; and a policy-making Women's Conference. These demands were supported by women across the Party, and by Anas Sarwar and Richard Leonard. Following Richard's election in November 2017, the Scottish Executive and Party made rapid progress. The Scottish Party Conference in March 2018 gave unanimous endorsement to the rule changes that allowed us to organising a policy-making Women's Conference, including direct elections for the Women's Committee and for two SEC members.

## Policy-making Women's Conferences

Our first policy-making Women's Conference took place in Glenrothes in November 2018: Conference delegations reflected 50% CLPs and 50% trade unions and affiliates; and each CLP was encouraged to send an 'under 27' delegate, in addition to the two CLP delegates. The majority of CLPs were represented, a number of affiliates, and a wide range of topics were considered through the motions proposed.

These included: parental leave and pay policies; gender quotas; gender audits; appointing a Scottish Labour Women's Officer; equal pay; universal credit; women and state pension; social care; women in the Middle East; period dignity; social care and dignity; sex and relationships education; mental health; gender-based violence against women;

sexual harassment; 50:50 in local government; and BAME Women representation. A motion on tackling prostitution and criminalising demand was not passed.

Of these topics, Conference selected four to go to the Scottish Party Conference in spring 2019: the CLP section voted for the motion calling for full time staff resource to appoint a Scottish Labour Women's Officer, but this was ruled out by the CAC at Scottish Conference, so the Women's Committee Chair has written to Jennie Formby, General Secretary, to progress this resource request. The four motions successfully tabled – and passed – at Scottish Party conference were on equal pay, social care, mental health, and sexual harassment.

## Scottish Labour Women's Committee and the Scottish Policy Forum

The newly-elected Scottish Labour Women's Committee has met several times since then. Our Chair is Cathy Peattie, and we have two vice Chairs: Patricia Duncan (link with CLP women's officers and members) and Siobhan McCready (link with trade unions and affiliates). The reserved seat

for an under-27 delegate is currently vacant following a resignation and will be elected at the next Conference.

The two directly elected members of the SEC have taken

up their places and the Committee has agreed a campaign plan which includes policies to invest in social care as a priority; supporting women candidates and extending AWS for both Westminster and Scottish Parliaments; the establishment of a newsletter to all women members in Scotland; learning from two Women's Forums (already well established in Glasgow and Edinburgh); and staffing a stall at the forthcoming STUC Women's Conference in Perth 28th-29th October.

Women's Conference also directly elected five women onto the Scottish Policy Forum. A rule change agreed by Party Conference in March introduced six reserved seats on the Scottish Policy Forum for the Women's Conference elected representatives, so we now have champions for the Women's Conference policies, fully involved in the current policy process.

## Women's Conference 2019/2020

Our 2019 Women's Conference had been scheduled for Saturday 16th November in Glasgow but this has now been postponed to a date to be confirmed in Spring 2020, given the likelihood of a General election. However, the date is being held for the Women's Committee to consider a half-day event to bring women members together, with our priority topic agreed as climate change and the Green Deal.

### Contact details for Scottish Labour Women:

[scotlabwomen@labour.org.uk](mailto:scotlabwomen@labour.org.uk);  
@ScotLabourWom.



# YELLOW PAGES: DAILY BRIEFING FOR CONFERENCE DELEGATES

*Yellow Pages* is a briefing that is produced by CLPD for delegates at Labour Party Annual Conference. Printed on yellow paper, it is published daily, with up to date information, advice and reports on what is taking place at Conference.

It is regarded as indispensable by those needing to understand how each day works at Conference. It is given out to delegates each morning as they enter the conference centre. If you are attending Annual Conference don't forget to pick up your copy of *Yellow Pages* every day.



## CLPD AND ITS GAINS FOR PARTY DEMOCRACY

CLPD was formed in 1973 by a group of rank-and-file activists with support from about ten Labour MPs. The main motivation for the Campaign was the record of the Labour governments in the sixties and the way that Annual Conference decisions were continually ignored on domestic and international issues. The immediate cause was Harold Wilson's imperious and undemocratic rejection in 1973 of any decision by Annual Conference to adopt an alternative economic policy involving the possible public ownership of some 25 strategic companies.

CLPD's first demand was, therefore, for mandatory reselection of MPs so they would be under pressure to carry out Conference policies and be accountable to Party members. This demand was achieved in 1979/80 through the overwhelming support of CLPs and several major unions, especially those unions where the demand for reselection was won at their own annual conferences (eg TGWU, AUEW, NUPE).

CLPD also sought to make the leader accountable through election by an electoral college involving MPs, CLPs and TUs. Previously Labour leaders were elected by MPs alone. This demand was achieved in January 1981 and was an advance for Party democracy, although some MPs saw it as a reason to defect and form the SDP, eventually to get fewer votes than Lord Sutch's Party.

CLPD additionally promoted a range of reforms to give Labour women and black and minority ethnic members greater representation within the Party.

The main demand for a woman on every parliamentary shortlist was achieved over the period 1986-88, soon followed by All Women Shortlists.

CLPD will sometimes promote seemingly broader, non-democracy issues such as the significant extension of public ownership, defending the welfare state, and the first-past-the-post electoral system (PR would mean no majority Labour Governments). All such policies derive from our commitment to socialist values and socialist advancement.

The major focus of CLPD's work in recent years has been to win back the power for ordinary rank-and-file Party

members, which has been surreptitiously transferred to the centre under the pretext of 'modernisation' and, ironically, 'extending Party democracy'.

For example, CLPD campaigned for, and achieved, OMOV for the CLP section of the National Policy Forum. CLPD continues to campaign for a real policy-making conference and an effective and accountable NEC.

**To find out more about CLPD, visit our website at [www.clpd.org.uk](http://www.clpd.org.uk). CLPD can usually provide speakers for meetings, especially if requests are made well in advance.**

To join the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy please visit [www.clpd.org.uk](http://www.clpd.org.uk) or fill in the form below and return it to: CLPD Treasurer, 157 North Street, Luton, LU2 7QH with a cheque payable to CLPD.

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Annual rates: £20 individuals; £5 unwaged and low waged (under £8,000); £25 couples (£6 unwaged and low waged); £25 national & regional organisations; £15 CLPs, TUs and Co-op Parties; £5 CLP branches. Young members (under 27) introductory sub £3.