

NOTHING ABOUT YOU, WITHOUT YOU: A MANIFESTO WITH AND FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

FOREWORD

Over the last seven years disabled people have borne the brunt of the cuts inflicted on them by the Conservative Government and the Coalition before them.

The cuts have had a detrimental effect on the lives of disabled people, cutting living standards and undermining their access to education, social care and to justice.

Two years ago the United Nations (UN) convened a committee to investigate state violations of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD). Last year the UN published their report and concluded that the Conservative Government had committed 'grave, systematic violations of the rights of persons with disabilities.'

This is a damning indictment of the treatment of disabled people by the Conservatives, one which shames us as a country.

We believe in a social model of disability, a society which removes the barriers restricting opportunities and choices for disabled people. As such we will build on the previous Labour government's commitment to disabled people in 2009 as signatories to the UN CRPD. A Labour government will incorporate the UN CRPD into UK law.

We are proud of the manifesto we have developed with, and for, disabled people, and would like to take the opportunity of thanking everyone who has taken part in Labour's Disability Equality Roadshow over the last year. We have crossed the length and breadth of the country to engage with disabled people and their carers, capturing their views on what needs to change for disabled people to live full and independent lives.

We will continue to work with disabled people in government, fulfilling our promise of 'nothing about you, without you'.



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our most grateful thanks to everyone who has taken part in the Disability Equality Roadshow events in Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Norwich, Sheffield, and Rotherham. It was a real honour to meet you all and to hear your experiences first hand.

Thank you as well to everyone who submitted evidence through Labour's National Policy Forum process and the Labour Policy Forum website.

To all the disabled people's organisations, disability charities, Disability Labour and the TUC's disability representative, for your help and advice in the planning of the Roadshow, many thanks.

And finally to everyone who has contacted us over the last two years with your ideas and contributions, too many to mention individually, we are truly grateful.

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INTRODUCTION

Labour is the party of equality and diversity. The next Labour government will ensure that no-one in our society is held back. We know that fairer societies are better for all of us. To truly achieve this, the next Labour government will build a Britain for the many: a fairer, more equal and diverse society that treats people of all backgrounds and abilities with dignity and respect.

Over the last seven years, disabled people, including people with physical or mental impairments and long-term health conditions, have been scapegoated by the Conservative Government and the Coalition. A 2016 UN inquiry found that since 2010 the UK Government has been responsible for 'grave, systematic violations' of the UN CRPD. The Conservatives have stonewalled this unprecedented inquiry and refused to enact its recommendations.

Disabled people are twice as likely to live in poverty compared with non-disabled people in part due to the extra costs associated with their disability. This has not stopped the Conservatives from disproportionately targeting disabled people with their destructive cuts. Currently 4.2 million disabled people live in poverty and new evidence indicates that this number is increasing as a result of cuts in support. According to Scope, the 2012 Welfare Reform Act has cut nearly £28 billion in social security support from 3.7 million disabled people. The 2016 Welfare Act cuts are adding to the real suffering many disabled people are experiencing. And of course this doesn't include the cuts in social care, or the NHS, or education or transport, all of which have directly affected disabled people.

In 2016, the Labour Party launched the Disability Equality Roadshow, to ensure as we developed new policies for government, we fully engaged with disabled people and their carers, committing to the principle 'nothing about me, without me'. As part of the Disability Equality Roadshow, we travelled the length and breadth of the country, meeting with thousands of disabled people, carers and stakeholders. We discussed the issues they face and their priorities for the future, focusing on the articles of the UN CRPD. Disabled people who were unable to attend the events were able to submit their views to us online. We have collated and consolidated all of this information in the pledges that we set out here in this manifesto 'With and for Disabled People'.

Only Labour will champion the rights of disabled people and build a country where disabled people are supported to lead fulfilling and independent lives. We are committed to a social model of disability and will enshrine the UN Convention on

the Rights of Disabled People fully into UK law. Labour will do away with the Work Capability and Personal Independence Payment assessments and replace them with a personalised, holistic process which provides each individual with a tailored plan, building on their strengths and addressing barriers, whether finance, skills, health, care, transport, or housing related. We will reverse cruel Conservative changes to Personal Independence Payments, which are denying 160,000 disabled people the support they need and we will scrap the Conservatives' punitive sanctions regime. Under a Labour government, disability issues will be incorporated into every single government department. Labour will support disabled people into work, halving the disability employment gap. And we will reverse cuts to the Work-Related Activity Component of Employment Support Allowance, affecting half a million sick and disabled people.

KEY PLEDGES

- Labour supports a social model of disability. People may have a condition or an impairment but are disabled by society. We need to remove the barriers in society that restrict opportunities and choices for disabled people.
- Labour will build on the previous Labour Government's commitment to disabled people in 2009 as signatories to the UN CRPD. A new Labour Government will incorporate the UN CRPD into UK law.
- Labour will transform our social security system. Like the NHS, our social security system should be there for all of us in our time of need, providing security and dignity in retirement and the basics in life should we become sick or disabled, or fall on hard times.
- We will repeal cuts in social security support to disabled people through a new Social Security Bill published in our first year of office.
- Labour will scrap the Work Capability and Personal Independence Payment assessments and replace them with a personalised, holistic assessment process which provides each individual with a tailored plan, building on their strengths and addressing barriers, whether finance, skills, health, care, transport, or housing related.
- Labour will change the culture of the social security system, from one that demonises sick and disabled people to one that is supportive and enabling. As a starting point we will scrap the Conservatives' punitive sanctions regime and change how Job Centre Plus staff are performance managed.

ENSURING AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

"We [disabled people] are treated as being guilty by the DWP until we prove that we are innocent."

"The current social security system is taking away peoples' choices over their lives and taking away their fundamental rights."

Disability Equality Roadshow participants

PLEDGES

- Labour will transform our social security system. Like the NHS, our social security system should be there for all of us in our time of need, providing security and dignity in retirement and the basics in life should we become sick or disabled, or fall on hard times. We will repeal cuts in social security support to disabled people through a new Social Security Bill published in our first year of office.
- Labour will reverse the cruel cuts to Personal Independence Payments, Employment Support Allowance Work-Related Activity Group and Universal Credit Limited Capability to Work and we will repeal the hideous Bedroom Tax which has punished so many disabled and non-disabled people. The Conservatives' punitive sanctions will go too.
- Labour will scrap the discredited Work Capability and Personal Independence Payment assessments and replace them with a personalised, holistic assessment process which provides each individual with a tailored plan, building on their strengths and addressing barriers, whether financial, skills, health, care, transport, or housing related.

Over the last seven years, disabled people have borne the brunt of the social security cuts from the Conservatives and the Conservative-Lib Dem Coalition before them.

The 2012 Welfare Reform Act has been estimated by Scope to have cut approximately £28 billion in social security support from 3.7 million disabled people in spite of it being well recognised that disabled people are twice as likely to live in poverty as non-disabled people in part by virtue of the extra costs associated with their disability.



The 2012 Act included the introduction of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) to replace Disability Living Allowance (DLA), a new sanctions regime, and new assessment processes for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and PIP. All of these have had serious concerns raised about them, including from the UN inquiry who said there were 'grave, systematic violations' on the rights of disabled people, the Information Commissioner concerning the deaths of claimants following their Work Capability Assessment finding them fit for work, and indeed the most recent reviewer of PIP who raised concerns yet again about the quality and reliability of the PIP assessment process where two thirds of decisions are overturned on appeal.

According to the Coalition Government's estimates, by 2018, 600,000 fewer people will be getting PIP than received DLA. The mental health charity MIND has revealed that 55% of people with mental health conditions transferring from DLA to PIP are being assessed as ineligible for PIP or having their support reduced. These figures are before the disgraceful introduction of new PIP regulations without any debate in Parliament, which overturned two tribunal rulings that people with mental health conditions should receive the higher rate of PIP support. So much for parity of esteem for people with mental health conditions: another broken promise from the Conservatives.

The Conservative Government's own figures show that since 2010, we are spending less and less in supporting disabled people as a percentage of our country's wealth (Gross Domestic Product, GDP). Eurostat data from 2012 shows that we ranked 17th out of 32 EU countries in spending on disability support as a percentage of GDP.

In spite of the Conservatives pledging not to cut support to disabled people in their 2015 manifesto, the 2016 Welfare Reform and Work Act did exactly that. In addition to the four-year freeze in social security support affecting disabled people, the 2016 Act cut financial support by £1500 a year to half a million disabled people who had been found not fit-for-work but who may be in the future on the ESA Work-Related Activity Group.

In Scotland, in spite of talking the talk, the Scottish National Party (SNP) has failed to tackle the difficulties disabled people face with the devolved powers at their disposal. The SNP Government had the opportunity to protect disabled people from the full impact of the Conservatives' punitive social security cuts as the social security budget was due to be devolved to the Scottish Parliament under the Scotland Act this year. Although they now have control over 11 types of social security support, they have failed to make any discernible difference to the lives of disabled people.

The Conservatives have fostered an insidious culture of fear and blame to justify their programme of cuts, deliberately attempting to vilify social security claimants as the new undeserving poor. Labour will transform our social security system to one that is efficient, responsive, and provides basic support. Time and time again, we have heard how worthless the system makes people feel. For the vast majority of people who have paid into it all their working lives, this is insulting.

Work should always pay more than being on social security; but relying on social security should not leave people feeling worthless and abandoned as it does now.

Labour has already pledged to get rid of the discriminatory and unfair Bedroom Tax, but we will also scrap the discredited Work Capability and Personal Independence Payment assessments and replace them with a system based on personalised, holistic support, one that provides each individual with a tailored plan, building on their strengths and addressing barriers, whether finance, skills,



health, care, transport, or housing related. We want to stop the profiteering from these assessments, so we will use public or voluntary sector organisations which are local and accessible to claimants, not those private companies that have manipulated the system for maximum profits.

The Conservatives' punitive sanctions system must go too, so Job Centre Plus will be reformed and not just assessed on how many people they get off their books. Labour will change the culture of our social security system and how the public see it. Like the NHS, it is based on principles of inclusion, support and security for all, assuring our dignity and the basics of life were we to fall on hard times or become incapacitated. It is there for all of us should any one of us become sick or disabled.

WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

"I declared my mental health condition [when I applied for a job] and even though my experiences and qualifications made me suitable for the position, I didn't even get an interview. Even though I am similarly or better qualified than others going for the same job."

Disability Equality Roadshow participant

PLEDGES

- Labour will halve the disability employment gap by supporting employers retain employees who may have developed a long-term health condition or an impairment. Job Centre Plus will have a new duty to work with local authorities and local employers on recruitment needs and practices. Employees with an impairment or chronic condition will have a new right to flexible working.
- We will require organisations with over 250 employees to report annually on the number and proportion of disabled people they employ.
- We will commission a review to explore how we can expand Access to Work support, including for self-employed disabled people.
- Labour will review specialist employment services and will work with local authorities, unions and the voluntary sector to develop local, alternative employment opportunities for disabled people transitioning into employment or who may need more supportive work environments, such as the social enterprise 'Enabled Works' in Morley, Leeds.

The disability employment gap – the gap in employment between non-disabled and disabled people – is currently 31%. In 2015, it was 32%. The Conservatives pledged to halve the disability employment gap in their 2015 General Election manifesto. At the current rate it will take 50 years for this to be achieved.

Although four million people with disabilities are working already, there are another three million who are available to and want to work, but are currently unemployed. As the vast majority (90%) of disabled people have worked previously this is a waste of their skills, experience and talent.



There are implications for the economy and society as a whole. Research from the Social Market Foundation has estimated that halving the disability employment gap and supporting one million more disabled people into work would boost the economy by £13 billion a year.

There are many reasons for the disability employment gap including a lack of information and advice for employers. A recent survey showed 15% of disabled people felt they had been discriminated against when applying for a job, and one in five while they were in work. That's why the next Labour government will work with employers to overcome these issues through stronger laws and proper enforcement of the Equality Act.

The Conservatives' warm words have not been followed up with any meaningful action. After closing 48 Remploy factories for disabled people in 2013, making 2,000 people redundant in the process, they failed to transfer the money that they had saved from these closures to support disabled people into work. The chaos and inadequacy of the specialist employment support programme, Access to Work, which last year supported just over 37,000 disabled people into and at work, and Job Centre Plus' Disability Employment service show the Conservatives are not serious about tackling the disability employment gap.

The SNP government in Scotland also promised to reduce the disability employment gap by at least half. However, since they took office they have failed to propose any policies that would help disabled people find meaningful employment and to tackle the disability employment gap.

Labour has already pledged to halve the disability employment gap. Over the next ten years we want to see a cultural shift in attitudes to people with chronic and fluctuating health conditions and disabilities in work and across society as a whole. To raise awareness of disability and work issues, every year we will require organisations with over 250 people to publish the number of disabled people that they employ.

We will support disabled people to stay in work or get back into work by increasing the numbers of disabled people who will be able to receive Access to Work support. We also want to expand Access to Work support to self-employed disabled people. We will ensure specialist disability employment advisers are there to support disabled people as part of our reform of Job Centre Plus.

Labour recognises that for some disabled people it may not be possible to participate in mainstream work; as such more supportive work arrangements need to be developed. We will provide 'seed corn' funding for the development of local enterprises such as the co-operative 'Enabled Works' in Morley, Leeds.

It is over 70 years since legislation was first introduced to prohibit employment-related discrimination against disabled people. Labour will lead the charge for a fair deal for disabled people in work and beyond.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

"Disabled people must be properly supported to access all available education and training opportunities."

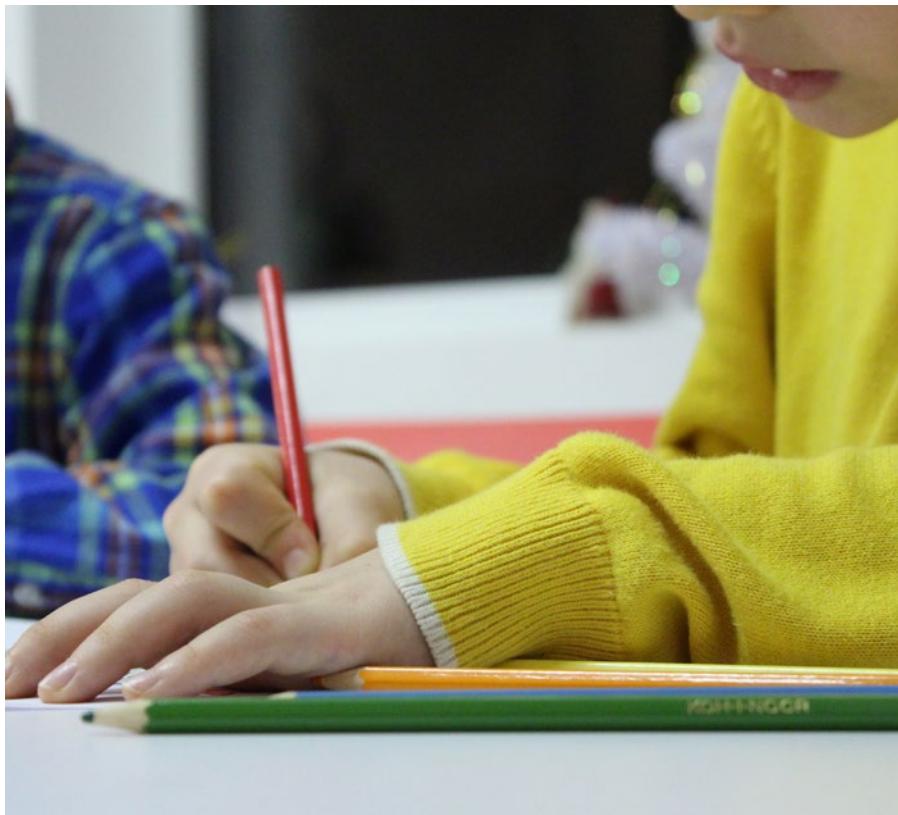
Disability Equality Roadshow participant

PLEDGES

- Labour will tackle the discrimination against disabled children in accessing education, including in Free Schools and Academies.
- We will address the disability education gap, which stops disabled children fulfilling their potential, replacing the flawed Education, Health and Care Plan assessment, which has been used to restrict access to support. We will also address issues with skilled support and resourcing, and ensure effective transitioning to adult services.
- Labour will deliver a strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) based on inclusivity, and embed SEND more substantially into training for teachers and non-teaching staff, so that staff, children and their parents are properly supported.
- Labour will make sure that the Modern Apprenticeship programme is open to all, and increase the numbers of disabled trainees included in the programme.
- Labour will place a duty on all higher education institutions to ensure that their courses are accessible to disabled students, including through scrapping tuition fees, course support and support for living costs.

The school funding crisis means that disabled pupils with Special Education Needs (SEN) are not only inadequately supported in mainstream schools, but are being excluded from these schools seven times more than non-disabled peers. Often they and their family's only choice is special residential schools. Labour believes disabled children and their families should be able to attend a mainstream school when they want to.

The Conservative Government has failed to tackle the disability employment gap and has failed to deliver an education policy that enables children with special education needs, physical or learning disabilities (SEND) to reach their potential which would enable them to participate fully in society.



SEND young people are more likely to not be in education, employment or training at 19 years of age. The Conservatives have failed to engage with children and young people and enable them to have more autonomy over their lives and empower them through education and employment. Labour will deliver a strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) based on inclusivity, and embed SEND more substantially into training for teachers and non-teaching staff, so that staff, children and their parents are properly supported.

Although the 2014 Children and Families Act introduced Education Health and Care Plans (ECHPs) from birth to 25 years providing the potential for a more joined-up needs assessment and care plan, it is clear that the ECHPs are in effect restricting access to support for all but those with the most severe needs. Getting an assessment in the first place requires monumental efforts from parents and teachers alike, and on top of that there are issues with the quality of these assessments.

But help in caring for disabled children has also been hit by the Conservatives. On average, it costs three times as much to raise a disabled child. Families with disabled children face considerable additional expenditure on heating, housing, clothing, equipment and other items compared with other families. And yet the Conservatives' programme of social security and social care cuts are making it harder for families to cope, let alone thrive so that their children can develop to be the best that they can be. Transitioning to adult services is also still a huge issue, with severe financial pressures facing social care adding to the difficulties of moving from children's services.

Similarly, young disabled people have found it really hard to get on apprenticeship schemes and with Conservative cuts to disabled students' allowances (DSA) the onus has been placed on universities or disabled students themselves to ensure that their access needs are supported.

Labour has pledged to tackle the disability education gap and to reform the ECHP process, including improving access to and reliability of assessments, and adequate support to implement the ECHP.

We will make sure that Modern Apprenticeships are open to disabled people, increasing the numbers of disabled apprentices year on year. And we will increase accessibility of higher education to disabled students by placing a duty on all universities and higher education institutions to define in their access scheme how disabled students will be supported, including through tuition fee structures and bursaries for living costs.

ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENTS

"Lack of safe and secure affordable housing is a barrier to disabled people living independently."

Disability Equality Roadshow participant

PLEDGES

- Labour will develop environments that enable disabled people to live independently, and not in isolation, reflecting our commitment to Article 19 in the UN CRPD.
- We will build more accessible and disabled-friendly new homes as part of our affordable housing programme.
- Labour will stop the expansion of driver-only operation on board trains. Guards are essential for allowing disabled passengers access to trains.
- Labour will reverse the cut to the funding to the Access to All programme, which was set up to improve accessibility to all of Britain's railway stations.

Conservative cuts to public transport have disproportionately impacted on disabled people who rely more heavily on it to get around. In particular, cuts to local bus services, especially in rural areas have had a profound impact on disabled bus users, as many disabled people live in a household with no car, and disabled people use buses more frequently than non-disabled people.

Fewer than one in five railway stations is fully accessible and train providers have been criticised for the decline in the quality of the services they provide for disabled passengers, including something as basic as toilet facilities.

The Conservatives' cuts are also impacting on where disabled people are able to live, affecting their ability to live independently. The Bedroom Tax, cuts threatening the viability of supported housing projects for disabled and older people, and the freeze in Local Housing Allowance are all having a big impact on disabled people being able to afford to continue to live in their homes. This is on top of a national housing crisis with the lowest level of house building in peacetime since the 1920s, and a ballooning of insecure and poor quality private rental housing.

Labour has promised to ensure that we will build more accessible and disabled-friendly new homes as part of our commitment to build 100,000 new affordable homes a year.

We will also stop the expansion of driver-only operated trains, which has a direct impact on disabled people's ability to travel. By removing guards, disabled passengers lose the guarantee that they can turn up and travel when they want; instead disabled people will be forced to give 24 hours' notice that they wish to travel.

And Labour will reverse the cuts to the Access to All programme so that more train stations are accessible to disabled travellers.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

"Cuts to the NHS are falling hardest onto disabled people."

Disability Equality Roadshow participant

PLEDGES

- Labour, in partnership with disabled people, will seek to develop a network of local, 'one-stop-shop' independent living hubs to be led by disabled people, reflecting our commitment to Article 19 in the UN CRPD.
- Labour will give the NHS the resources it needs by investing an additional £37 billion over the next parliament.
- Labour will ensure the social care system is fully funded by investing £8 billion in the next parliament, and laying the foundations for a National Care Service.
- Labour will increase the status of domiciliary care workers by introducing training and career pathways for carers to progress. And we will exclude people's homes from the means-test for domiciliary care.
- Labour will increase Carer's Allowance to £73 a week, an increase of 16%, in recognition of Britain's dedicated, unpaid carers.

There is strong evidence that the Conservatives' austerity measures have had detrimental effects on the health and care of disabled people, as well as their ability to live independently. In addition to failing to deliver 'parity of esteem' for people with mental health conditions, the number of specialist learning disability nurses has discernibly decreased. Under the Conservatives there has also been a reduction in training commissions for learning disability nurses.

Since 2010, the Conservatives have cut £4.6 billion from social care which means that across the country, people with chronic health conditions, disabled and older people who go into crisis or have an accident are being admitted into hospital when this could have been avoided had they been better cared for in the community. And the lack of social care in the community means that many people end up staying much longer in hospital than they need because they can't be safely discharged.

In 2015 the SNP government proposed 'a real alternative to austerity' in Scotland. Instead, they have slashed more than £1.5 billion from local services like social care. The SNP has had the powers to top-up Carer's Allowance since September 2016, but they are yet to use it. Carers are still waiting for the promised increase



in the allowance. After two manifesto pledges in 2015 and 2016, a six month feasibility study and endless questions, carers in Scotland are no better off.

Labour is committed to the equal right of all disabled people to live in the community, with choices equal to others as expressed in Article 19 of the UN CRPD. We will work with disabled people and local agencies seeking to develop a network of local, independent living hubs - a 'one-stop-shop' for all a disabled person's needs – to enable this. These would be run by disabled people, foster independence, facilitate peer or advocacy support, as well as providing practical support for disabled people. Several examples of good practice were visited or mentioned at different Disability Equality Roadshow events, including Sheffield's Centre for Independent Living and Equal Lives in Norwich.

Labour wants to improve the status of domiciliary care work, which we believe for far too long has been seen as low-skilled, low-paid work. We will develop training with career pathways and progression for paid carers.

And we will also support Britain's unsung heroes; our unpaid carers, who provide millions of hours of unpaid support to loved ones, friends or neighbours every week, and are estimated to save the country over £132 billion a year. A Labour government will increase Carer's Allowance from £62 a week to £73 a week in recognition of the contribution carers make.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

"The justice system can leave disabled people feeling scared and alone. Some cases of hate crime have been so bad that disabled people have had to move homes in order for the abuse to stop."

Disability Equality Roadshow participant

PLEDGES

- Labour will ensure disabled people have the same access to justice as non-disabled people. We will strengthen the Equality Act in order to empower disabled people to confidently challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice, wherever it occurs.
- Labour will ensure annual reporting of the levels of disability hate crime and violence against disabled women, putting into place comprehensive national action plans to stop these crimes.

Disabled people's ability to access justice has been hit by the Conservatives' cuts to legal aid support, to local government and to local law centres that provide free legal advice to communities.

Cuts to legal aid mean less support to challenge social security decisions, affecting up to 80,000 disabled people. Although welfare rights agencies have tried to fill the void, the Conservatives have plans in the pipeline to abolish face-to-face tribunal hearings on social security matters.

In addition to the Conservatives' legal aid cuts, tribunal fees of up to £1200 introduced in 2013 have made it harder for disabled people to challenge discrimination. As a result, disabled people find it very difficult to challenge employers' potentially discriminatory behaviour.

The Conservatives have also failed to expand the scope of the law to cover crimes committed against people on the basis of disability, even though these hate crimes are now on the rise.

Given the Conservatives' continued threats to abolish the Human Rights Act, there are concerns that equal recognition under the law for disabled people may be at risk. Similarly, the Conservatives' proposed Great Repeal Bill has yet to define what EU legislation will be transposed into UK law, including that which promotes and protects the rights of disabled people.



Labour will ensure that disabled people have equal access to justice as non-disabled people. We will strengthen the Equality Act so that it works better for disabled people. A Labour government will reinstate the public sector equality duties and seek to extend them to the private sector, ensuring all citizens benefit from this Labour legislation. A Labour government will enhance the powers and functions of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, making it truly independent, to ensure it can support people to effectively challenge any discrimination they may face.

We will ensure that under the Istanbul Convention, there is annual reporting of the levels of disability hate crimes and violence against disabled women, and comprehensive national action plans to stop these crimes are put in place, including training for the police.

PARTICIPATING FULLY IN POLITICAL, PUBLIC AND CULTURAL LIFE

"Disabled candidates are deterred from standing as candidates; they receive very little support or guidance. There's a complete lack of information on how to participate and stand in local, regional and national elections".

Disability Equality Roadshow participant

PLEDGES

- As a political party, Labour will adopt accessible selection processes at local, regional and national levels of political office, and ensure reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates in recognition of the additional costs that they face.
- Labour will undertake a review of sports, arts and leisure venues to determine how access to people with different conditions and impairments can best be improved.

The Conservatives have failed to build on the work Labour undertook in government enabling disabled people to participate in cultural life.

Disabled people are still under-represented in many walks of life, from drama to sport to politics. Similarly the opportunity for disabled people to participate as spectators and enjoy a football match or concert is too often still denied to them.

Despite the commercial success of the Premier League, a recent study by the Equality and Human Rights Commission showed that just seven out of 20 Premier League teams are providing the minimum recommended space for wheelchair users, and just seven of 20 have adequate 'changing place' toilet facilities for disabled people.

Labour will address these issues by undertaking a review of access and inclusiveness in sports, arts and leisure venues, considering the needs of people with different disabilities.

We will also promote the use of British Sign Language (BSL) by developing a BSL National Plan for England, reflecting a similar scheme developed in Scotland by Scottish Labour. The next Labour government will also introduce legislation to give legal status to BSL through an Act of Parliament.



Labour will open up democracy to disabled people, many of whom have felt disenfranchised for too long. We will develop an inclusion and access strategy that ensures disabled members are able to participate fully in all local party activities, and that there is a fair and accessible selection process for all candidates for local, regional and national levels of political office.

As a political party Labour will provide training and ensure reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates in recognition of the additional costs that they will face.

APPENDIX

Number and proportion of people who have a long-term health problem or disability by region, England and Wales, 2011

	1	2	3	4
North East	285,087	11.0%	277,105	10.7%
North West	724,045	10.3%	702,760	10.0%
Yorkshire & The Humber	478,358	9.1%	515,291	9.8%
East Midlands	393,242	8.7%	451,055	9.9%
West Midlands	508,454	9.1%	553,610	9.9%
East	434,168	7.4%	542,346	9.3%
London	551,664	6.7%	605,501	7.4%
South East	593,643	6.9%	762,561	8.8%
South West	436,733	8.3%	536,963	10.2%
Wales	364,318	11.9%	331,537	10.8%
England and Wales	4,769,712	8.5%	5,278,729	9.4%
			46,027,471	82.1%
				56,075,912

Office for National Statistics, 'Disability in England and Wales: 2011 and comparison with 2001', 30 January 2013

Column 1 = Day to day activities limited a lot (nos/%)

Column 2 = Day to day activities limited a little (nos/%)

Column 3 = Day to day activities not limited (nos/%)

Column 4 = All people

