

Politics@Work

GENERAL ELECTION SPECIAL

Issue May 2017



In this issue...

The General Secretary backs the Labour manifesto

**The Regions MPs have their say
Out and about Campaigning**

Labour Manifesto 'Would Change Millions of Lives' Tim Roache



Steve Jennings - Political Officer

GENERAL ELECTION POLL: BRITISH VOTERS COME OUT IN SUPPORT OF LABOUR MANIFESTO PLEDGES

Voters overwhelmingly back policies set out in Labour's leaked manifesto, including

nationalising the railways, building more houses and raising taxes on higher earners, according to a poll. The ComRes survey shows around half of people support state ownership of the train network (52 per cent), energy market (49 per cent) and Royal Mail (50 per cent).

Banning zero hours contracts was supported by 71 per cent with just 16 per cent against, and 65 per cent said they agreed with raising income tax on those earning more than £80,000 a year with 24 per cent opposed.

GMB has backed the Labour manifesto which will practically change millions of lives. Jeremy Corbyn unveiled the party's pledges to the country in Bradford . It includes promises on social care, housing, the NHS, a new minimum wage of £10 per hour and foster care.

Tim Roache, GMB General Secretary says;

"Labour's manifesto is one that would practically change millions of lives.

"From social care, to housing, to Sure Start and our NHS - it's a manifesto that makes sense for working people.

"It's a manifesto about fairness and about helping real people to get by and get on in life.

"It's not paying lip service to the issues people face, it's taking them head on.

"The country is crying out for change. This is a manifesto that can deliver it.

"People need to get out there and vote for it."



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Wakefield-Mary Creagh

For the last 12 years I have been proud to serve as Wakefield's MP, standing up for hardworking people. Theresa May has called this unnecessary early election to secure a blank cheque for a chaotic Brexit, which will destroy jobs and sweep away workers' and trade union rights. This election is a choice between an MP who with a record of standing up for Wakefield, or a Tory stooge, who will sit quiet while the Tories cut our public services and roll back progress on workers' rights. The last 8 years of Conservative government at Westminster have been a disaster for hardworking people in Wakefield. I was proud to vote against Tories' Trade Union Act 2016, which undermines the ability of trade unions like the GMB to defend its members at a time when workers need collective representation more than ever. Last year I joined steel workers as they marched in London while the Tories stood by and watched thousands of jobs disappear in the UK's steel industry. A vote for Labour is a vote to scrap the Trade Union Act. As a GMB member, who set up the first overseas GMB branch in Brussels in 1994, I will always be on the side of hardworking people.

Only Labour will fight for justice for pensioners and decent retirement incomes. I have supported the WASPI campaign for a fair retirement deal for women hit by the Tories changes to the state pension age. I was proud to present a petition to Parliament on behalf of campaigners in Wakefield, to vote for a fair deal for pensioners in Parliament, and if re-elected I will continue to support WASPI and work in Parliament to find a solution for women affected. The Tories are refusing to guarantee the triple lock on pensions, whereas Labour has pledged to protect it. I will always stand up for decent retirement incomes for those who have worked hard and paid in.



Mary Creagh

Membership of the EU has been vital for workers' and trade union rights. During the referendum campaign I campaigned with trade unions to highlight the vital role EU law plays in safeguarding these rights. Those rights are at risk under the Tories. Brexit Secretary David Davis said that his plans to deal with EU law are "about reversing – well, not repealing but amending – dealing with 40 years' accumulated policy and law". It is clear the Tories are not going to deliver a Brexit that works for working people, and a chaotic Brexit-supporting Tory MP in Wakefield would give the Theresa May a blank cheque to scrap key workers' rights.

This election is a choice between who will do the best job of standing up for Wakefield. I am proud of my record of standing up for our children's education, our NHS, our rights at work, our pensioners, the disabled and vulnerable against the Tories' ideological plans to sweep away workers' rights and cut funding to our vital public services and deliver a job-destroying chaotic Brexit. This election is a choice between me, standing on my record of standing up for Wakefield. Or a Tory stooge who will rubber stamp anything Theresa May wants.

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Sheffield Heeley - Louise Haigh

Like all Labour candidates, I'm in politics because I believe that people working together achieve more than they do alone. During my two years as an MP I've fought in Parliament for the same values that make me both a Labour member and a long standing trade unionist.

I've stood shoulder to shoulder with workers across our city in a number of major disputes. Staff at Eastern Avenue Jobcentre have been fighting to stop a planned move to the city centre, which would hit 70 staff as well as thousands of local people. I've run a petition opposing the closure and spoken in defence of Eastern Avenue many times in Parliament to attempt to force a Government rethink.

I've fought with public sector trade unions against closing regional tax offices like the one on Young Street, which would seriously hurt HMRC's ability to collect tax effectively, as well as dislocating staff just trying to get on with their jobs. As a former shop steward who represented workers in the private sector, I know how difficult it is to organise in the workplace and I know the vital work that trade unions do in ensuring decent conditions at work, in representing workers and making sure they're treated fairly. We have to work hard to ensure union membership is as high as possible and that trade unions are supported in protecting their members.

When it comes to this election, we have a choice between a Conservative Party which wants to strip away vital regulations in favour of a race to the bottom on wages, rights and protections at work. They have already attacked our workers with their restrictive Trade Union Bill which threatens the basic right to strike. They've no interest, once we leave the EU, in keeping the regulations that keep working hours reasonable and guarantee paid leave and maternity leave.

The alternative is a Labour MP who'll stand up for your rights at work, vote to keep in place and strengthen the protections we have, and fight for proper investment in the public services on which so many of us rely.

We've pledged to scrap the shameful fees for employment tribunals introduced by this Government, which make it harder for employees to get justice from employers by charging them up to £950. The measures have already seen a 70% drop in tribunals, which has disproportionately affected low paid women. We've pledged to introduce a proper Living Wage, giving workers across our country the dignity they need.

That's the future I'll be fighting for on June 8th – and I hope that's the future Sheffield's trade unionists decide to choose.



Louise Haigh out and about with Labour Party Campaigners



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Dewsbury - Paula Sherriff

Before 2015 Dewsbury had a part-time Tory MP who never spoke up for local people. Not anymore. Many will know that I am a trade unionist, having previously acted as a shop steward and equalities officer. In the past two years I am proud to have used that experience representing working people to have become one of the most active, campaigning MPs in parliament, and I am proud of the impact I've had.

I'm building a strong record of standing up for the people of Dewsbury, Mirfield, Denby Dale, Kirkburton. Above all, I've sought to be an effective constituency MP; helping thousands of local people with their problems. Both here and in Parliament, I've been standing up for our area - fighting the Tory Government's cuts to local schools, hospitals and public services, demanding better access to broadband, NHS dentistry and improved transport facilities.

I took on the government over NHS dentists and on the tampon tax and got results.

I took on big businesses like WH Smith for their outrageous practice of charging more for items in their hospital shops than on the High Street, and forced them to bring hospital prices in line with their other shops.

For years we have been campaigning day in, day out, to keep Dewsbury Hospital open and fight the downgrade plans while the Tories have been deaf to local people's concerns. So I'm delighted that the Shadow Health Secretary has announced that a Labour Government will immediately halt the Tories chaotic hospital closure plan - meaning that the threat to services at both Dewsbury and Huddersfield hospitals will be lifted. It shows that only Labour will protect our NHS.

I'm also proud of my record as a GMB MP. To me this means standing shoulder to shoulder with fellow trade unionists to get a better deal for those who slog their guts out just to get by and get on. On unequal pay and discriminatory employment practices, on big multinational businesses treatment of British workers - paying new staff less than others who are doing the same work - I've spoken out on the issues that matter to ordinary working people who simply want a better, fairer life at work.

After meeting with foster carers at a GMB event in Dewsbury earlier this year, I was pleased to welcome them to Parliament - to hear the challenges they face and to support their campaign for national improvements to the foster care system that will benefit both children and carers.



Paula Sherriff on an NHS march

Whether backing foster carers, or speaking up for those impacted by the government's punitive, humiliating policies against welfare recipients - I've sought to stand up for those whose voices too often go unheard.

If re-elected, I will continue to seek to strengthen the bond between the Labour party and the trade union movement. The trade unions were instrumental in creating the Labour party to fight for working people in Parliament, and in this time of insecure employment, zero-hours contracts and exploitative labour, the unions have never been needed more in the workplace, just as the voice of working people has never been more needed in Parliament.

On Brexit - the people have spoken. That's why I voted in Parliament to trigger the process of leaving the EU. Theresa May wants the British electorate to write her a blank cheque so she can pursue policies which open the door to ever increasing inequality, poorer public services, greater insecurity at work and declining living standards.

There are more fights yet to be won - with many local people already struggling on in work benefits, zero hours contracts and low pay - local people literally cannot afford another 5 years of Tory Government.

There is a clear choice at this election; a Tory MP who will have no option but to back Jeremy Hunt's plans to close essential services at Dewsbury and Huddersfield hospitals, who will rubber stamp huge funding cuts to every school in the constituency, or the proven commitment of a hardworking Labour MP who will continue to stand up for our local communities at every opportunity.

Please make sure your voice is heard by using your vote.

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Leeds West - Rachel Reeves

For the last 7 years, I have had the privilege of representing Leeds West, helping local residents and listening to their concerns - the people of Leeds West have always been my number one priority. I have visited many local employers to hear about the difficulties businesses are facing. For example, I met with Gough & Kelly, a Bramley-based solar energy company who shared with me the damage government cuts to renewable energy programs were causing to their business.

Meanwhile, I have been pleased to see the development of pioneering apprenticeship programmes offered by local employers The Big Word, a leading language and translation service based in Wortley.

The commitment of these local businesses to investing in the local area and promoting apprenticeships has often led to the creation of full-time jobs but employers need greater support to further grow. If I am re-elected on June 8th, I will continue to fight to ensure businesses and workers have the backing they need for a fairer and more secure economy.

Following the 2015 floods, the devastation caused to local businesses was paramount. I hugely appreciate the support of GMB locally and nationally, from help with the initial clean up, to offering advice on how local employers and their staff could move forward. Local business owners like Sash Blinds on Kirkstall Road were faced with closing their operations for months having seen extensive supplies of stock destroyed. I met with ministers and leaders of Leeds City Council to push for a guarantee that flood alleviation schemes and further investment would be secured for areas like Kirkstall. I also held public meetings with local businesses along with insurance brokers and Leeds City Council business advisers to ensure local employers received all the support needed to protect their future. I have been pleased to support some of the excellent work done by the GMB, as Chair of the Asbestos in Schools group – a cause close to the hearts of many in Leeds West. In Armley, the J W Roberts textile factory closed in the 1950s, but continued to spread asbestos dust across the rooftops of nearby homes. Hundreds of former employees at the factory, as well as local residents, died from asbestos-related illnesses.

As Chair, it has been humbling to work alongside the GMB, the NUT and NASUWT, and with sufferers of mesothelioma and relatives of those who have died, to raise awareness and gather information about asbestos exposure in schools. It is vital that schools manage asbestos to avoid risking exposure to staff and pupils. The government is doing far too little but with the support of the trade unions, I hope we can secure a phased removal of all asbestos from our schools.

In Westminster, I have also campaigned on tackling loneliness, as Co-Chair of the Jo Cox commission on loneliness and I am grateful for the help that GMB have provided in furthering Jo's legacy in this way. Throughout all aspects of my work as an MP, I see the vital work of trade unions and I hope to continue working closely with GMB and with friends across the labour movement after June 8th.



Rachel Reeves and Tim Roache highlighting Public Sector Pay Pinch Campaign



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Halifax - Holly Lynch

I am proud to be running for re-election in my hometown of Halifax after spending my time in Parliament standing up for all workers but particularly emergency service personnel and young workers at the start of their careers.

I was recently joined in Halifax by the Shadow Health Secretary Jon Ashworth who came here to meet with paramedics from GMB, and other trade unions, in order to hear their experiences about being attacked on the job. No one should feel under physical danger at work and this is especially true for paramedics who head towards potentially dangerous situations in order to save lives.

My Protect the Protectors campaign has sought to improve the legal protections offered to all emergency service workers from assaults. I have gone on shifts with the Police, Fire and Rescue, and Ambulance service in my constituency which really is the best way to see the reality of the challenges they face.

In Parliament I introduced a Private Member's Bill which aimed to introduce these additional protections and I secured a number of debates where MPs from across the political spectrum expressed their support for my campaign.

During his visit to Halifax Jon Ashworth confirmed that Labour will make it a specific criminal offence to assault paramedics and NHS staff which I hope will act as a deterrent to those who put them at risk. It would also bring about a sense of justice for those who are victims of assault.

At our meeting in Halifax it was shocking to hear from paramedics who had been assaulted and found that little or no action had been taken by the authorities.

One of the most discriminatory policies introduced by the Conservatives is their decision to exclude those aged under 25 from the National 'Living Wage'.

This means that younger workers on the minimum wage are earning less than their older colleagues even if they are doing the same role. I have sought to hold the Government to account on this issue and organised a debate in Parliament last year.

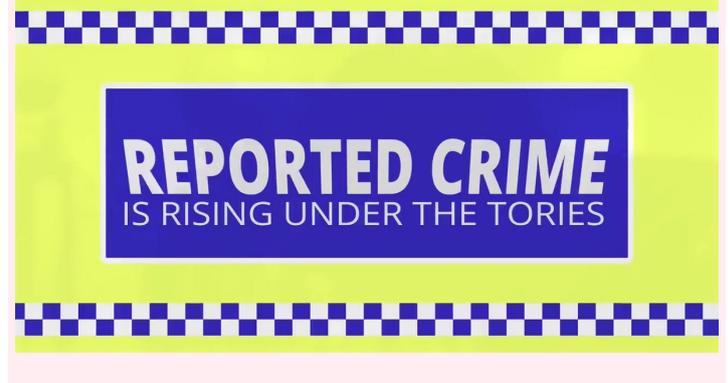
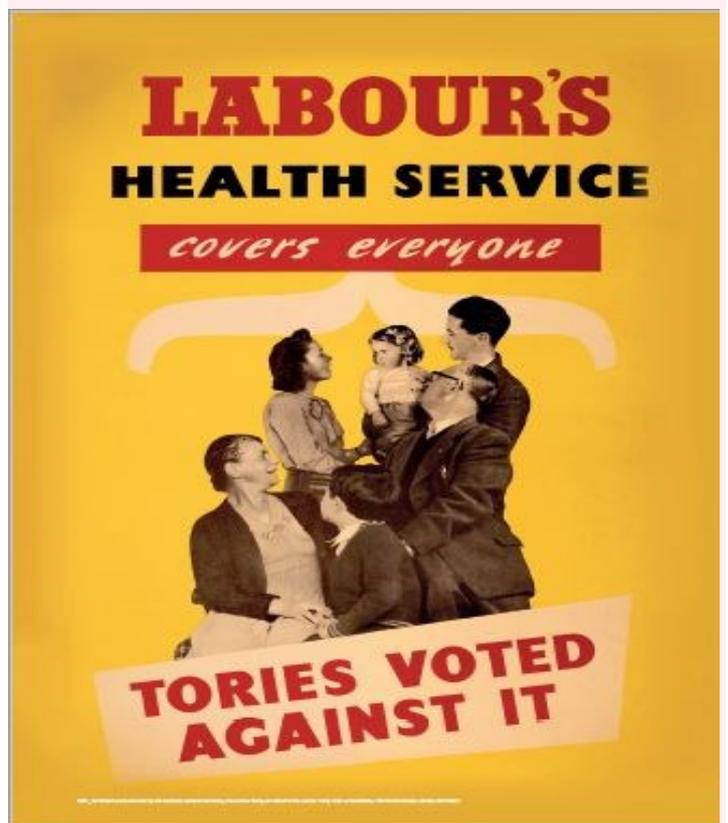
The Government initially defended this policy by arguing that younger workers were less productive however in response to one of my written questions they admitted they had no evidence to back this up.

Young members of the GMB visited Parliament last year to meet with me and veteran campaigner Jack Dromey to discuss ways we could work together to oppose this exclusion of young workers.

I hope to be able to continue with this work after June 8th and will be campaigning hard to defend this seat from the Conservatives.



Holly Lynch with Halifax Paramedics



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York Central - Rachael Maskell

Two years in Parliament has proved that unless politics has roots, it is no more than empty rhetoric. This is why Labour makes such a difference for working people and those who live across our communities.

The links that the union provides means that Labour is able to understand the really challenging time people have in their workplaces. Exploitation of labour, cuts to workers' rights, new industrial challenges like stress, work intensification, bogus self-employment and pick times.

As a trade unionist, I understand how important it is to involve union members in decision making. Why it is vital that the experts on the ground, the members, have a say in all that happens in Westminster. No matter if members work for a private company or in our schools, hospitals or councils, they bring such knowledge and expertise, that Labour can truly represent their constituents.

It was Labour who worked with the unions to expose Mike Ashley of Sports Direct who didn't even let his workers take a toilet break, or Philip Green of BHS, who ran away from his pension obligations while ordering a private yacht for himself. Since being elected in York Central in 2015, I have worked closely with the GMB and other unions, whether over the taxi drivers who are being undermined by Uber or at Nestle where 156 staff are being laid off.

When Nestle announced their cuts, I immediately spoke to workplace reps and the company, and then three days later met with members and then the management to ensure that everything possible was being done to mitigate against these job losses. I immediately put down an Early Day Motion with the other Labour MPs who were also facing Nestle job cuts and put a question to the Prime Minister. I am sure her reply took us all back 30 years when she said that the job centre would be open.

This is why we need all GMB members to go and support their local Labour MPs in this election. Labour MPs are your voice in Parliament. It doesn't matter if you have never campaigned in an election before. This election is so important and the Labour Party will welcome you coming out to offer lending a hand. In my constituency of York Central, we are having a trade union campaigning day to encourage all union members to work together to campaign for Labour.

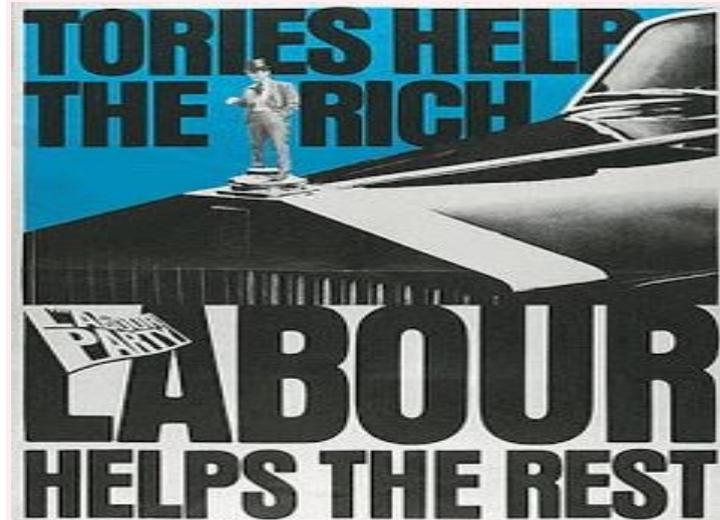
Every door that is knocked on, every leaflet that is posted, every poster that is put up in a window makes such a difference. For those who are less mobile, there is always phone call to make or envelopes to stuff.

Above all, you will make new friends and have a lot of fun as you work together for a common cause – for Labour to be in power on 8 June.



Rachael Maskell with workplace reps at Nestle

And with Richard Burgon (below)



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Tracy Brabin - Batley & Spen

In October 2016 I was elected to represent Batley & Spen, the community I'm from, grew up in and love.

It has been an incredible few months, attending 200 community engagements, speaking 80 times in the House of Commons and supporting hundreds of my constituents with their problems since my election. I'm proud to be running for re-election on June the 8th.

The support of your great campaigning union, the GMB, is essential and I'll always stand side by side with you. I believe we're stronger when we work together. In recent months the GMB have broken new ground for union organising in the gig-economy.

Your trailblazing representation of Uber drivers has shown that we should never settle for less when it comes to rights at work.

The GMB has led the way at ASOS, where you've exposed lamentable employment practices and done what unions do best – organise. If I'm re-elected, you can always rely on my support in Parliament.

On the 8th of June you face a stark decision, a Parliament stacked full of weak Tories who don't care about your interests or Labour MPs who are on your side, fighting your corner.

This election is about what matters to you. I'm proud the Labour Party is offering a bold vision of our country.

We know the NHS is in crisis, almost every day we hear about financial black holes, waiting lists up and targets being missed. In Batley & Spen our A&E at Dewsbury Hospital is under threat of downgrade to an urgent care unit.

We've opposed this in the community and I've challenged the Prime Minister face to face to no avail.

We won't give up though and a vote for Labour will make a difference as we've pledged to immediately halt all closures of hospitals pending urgent review.

We should never forget there's one party who created and loves our NHS, it's the Labour Party. We saved it and improved it in 1997 and will do so again in 2017.

I know you are as concerned as me about the Tories' school funding plans. Every single school in Batley & Spen is set to lose out in real terms over the next few years. Parents, teachers and head teachers all oppose these plans – it's only the Tories who won't listen.

In West Yorkshire alone we've lost 1,200 police officers from our streets between 2010 and 2016. Community safety is of the upmost importance to me so we've pledged to recruit 10,000 more police officers across the country.



Tracy Brabin and Neil Derrick on an NHS Rally in Leeds

Last June we decided to leave the EU, the Tories are going for a hard Brexit, out of the single market putting hundreds of thousands of jobs on the line. Your priorities are Labour's priorities; we will work tirelessly to keep and increase the number of jobs in Yorkshire and will never let your rights at work be watered down.

The GMB and the MPs you support can improve lives; we can keep campaigning for our NHS, for our schools and keep delivering for our communities if you vote Labour on the 8th of June.

NO RISE IN:

- ✓ VAT
- ✓ National Insurance
- ✓ Income Tax

PERSONAL TAX GUARANTEE

FOR 95% OF TAXPAYERS

Labour FOR THE MANY NOT THE FEW Share >>



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Jon Trickett - Hemsworth

The past seven years of tory rule have seen attack after attack on working people.

They've done nothing to protect against the massive increase in zero-hour contracts, the rise of low pay and the poor job prospects for young people. Instead, they've overseen working conditions get worse.

They've cut thousands of jobs. They've got rid of more than 10,000 police officers. Our national health services can't hire enough nurses so depend on expensive agency staff. The office staff that keep our public services running smoothly have been pushed to the absolute limit.

Mrs May's cutbacks have strangled our economy of the long-term investment it needs. It's seen areas outside of London and the South East be pushed even further behind.

Being self employed can be a very exciting time in a person's life. But sometimes it is bogus self-employment. Where big companies force workers to be self-employed. It's wrong that the Uber driver and the Deliveroo rider don't have rights like holiday pay and sick leave. This is on top of the thousands of other workers who are defined as self-employed unjustly.

When working people stand up for their rights, they're attacked from every angle. Take three brave women from the area I represent – the Kinsley Three. They were cleaners at the local school. Then their contract was outsourced because schools are struggling for cash. Their new contract, with a private firm saw their pay and pensions cut. They've been fighting for their rights since then, but sometimes it feels like they have had every trick in the book thrown at them.

The relentless attack on trade unions is a part of this battle against working people. They're trying to strangle the voice of workers so we cannot speak back to a government hell-bent on pushing back workers' rights.

The Tories want to deny working people a voice at a time when it is crucial to have strong unions. When we leave the EU we could have a Tory Brexit, where they'll trade away our public services and workers' rights to protect the privileged few. Or we could have a Brexit that works for you and your family, where working people are at the heart of our negotiations. Trade unions must also play a big part in this.

For me, it seems obvious.

Together we can work to stop the Tories' relentless attacks on working people.



Jon Trickett and Labour Party members in Hemsworth



THE LABOUR PARTY MANIFESTO 2017

AND UNDER
THEIR WATCH,
300,000 MORE
PENSIONERS
ARE IN POVERTY.

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John Healey— Wentworth and Dearne

I'm proud to work for you, and for our area. And proud to do so as a life-long GMB member.

I want to continue standing up for South Yorkshire, campaigning to make things better and supporting those who need help. But to carry on as your Labour MP, I need your backing and your vote on 8 June.

This Election is not a re-run of the Euro Referendum. People backed Brexit last year, and Britain is leaving the EU. Labour in Government will see this through to get a UK deal that tightens immigration and puts jobs and working people first.

Under the Tories, Britain has become a country of food banks and bank bonuses. Millionaires and big companies have been given tax cuts, while living standards and incomes for working people have fallen. We've seen seven years of the Tories making things tougher for ordinary families and hitting the North with bigger cuts than their own areas down South.

If Theresa May wins, the Tories will treat this as a free hand for another five years.

That's why strong campaigning unions, working with Labour MPs, are so important. Together we're battling at this Election to give Britain a fresh start and a Labour Government who will work for everyone.

Labour will:

- Secure the money needed for the NHS, end the Tories' privatisation drive, scrap the pay freeze and back NHS staff who are overworked and undervalued by Conservative ministers
- Set up a 'Bank of the North' to boost growth and jobs, bring in a new living wage of £10 an hour, require good apprenticeships in all companies with government contracts and legislate for much stronger union and workers' rights
- Protect pensioners' incomes with the 'triple lock', and keep the free bus pass and winter fuel allowance that Labour introduced
- Bring in free school meals for all primary children, backed by a fairer funding system for all schools, and bring back grants for students from families on working incomes
- Build the biggest programme of new council and housing association homes for 40 years, alongside new consumer rights for private renters, a plan to end rough sleeping homelessness and greater help for first-time buyers

**LABOUR WILL:
CLAMP DOWN ON
TAX HAVENS**



John Healey on the doorstep

As well as my national work leading for Labour on housing, I make sure local issues are at the heart of the work I do in Parliament. I've been voted 'best campaigning MP' and recently have won Government funds to save Wentworth Woodhouse for the public, won extra help from Ministers when our area was hit with big job losses in Tata, been fighting the new HS2 route and battling to keep our local services – like the job centre in Goldthorpe and the banks in Wath.

**THE TORIES HAVE FAILED OUR NHS.
LABOUR WILL GIVE IT THE RESOURCES
IT URGENTLY NEEDS.**

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Sarah Champion Rotherham

This election is a choice between two radically different visions of Britain's future. On one hand, the Tories, working for a privileged few, are fighting to make the rich richer while casting everyone else aside. On the other, a Labour government that would stand up for the many and ensure that everyone - whatever their wealth - can achieve their potential.

The Tories' record speaks for itself. The NHS and social care are on their knees, with waiting lists soaring and hospitals on the verge of financial collapse. Class sizes in schools continue to rise and budgets are stretched to the limit. Rather than address the crisis they themselves created, the Tories are obsessively focused on bringing back grammar schools to benefit a privileged few and leave everyone else with a second-class education. With house building at its lowest peacetime level since the 1920s, homelessness has soared and rough sleeping has more than doubled. Police cuts have left us with 20,000 fewer officers and neighbourhood policing almost non-existent. The Tories talk about economic recovery, but do you feel better off? Real wages are lower than they were in 2008 and working families are set to be £14,000 a year worse off.

At work, the Tories have declared war on our rights and the trade union movement. The Trade Union Act is nothing less than an assault on the democratic freedom of workers to organise. Meanwhile, limits on employment rights, extortionate tribunal fees and the rise of zero-hour contracts have left Britain's workers less secure, with unscrupulous employers free to exploit employees without consequence.

It doesn't have to be this way. A Labour government will always give our NHS the funding it needs. It was up to Labour to create it and it will be up to us to defend it. We will focus on driving up standards in every school, not just the privileged few. We will introduce a real living wage of at least £10 per hour and give all workers full rights from day one. By reversing cuts to capital gains tax, we will recruit 10,000 new police officers.

The choice is clear. I hope, on 8th June, you will choose Labour and re-elect me as Member of Parliament for Rotherham.



**7 years of
Tory failure
and chaos
- don't let
them off
the hook.**

**Vote Labour
on 8th June.**



**TEAM GMB
Labour**



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Politics@Work On the campaigning trail



GMB Campaigning in Batley and Spen



Sheffield Heeley



Leeds West



Rotherham



Barnsley East



Normanton, Pontefract and Castleford



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