

## FABIAN REVIEW

The quarterly magazine of the Fabian Society

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# PREPARING FOR POWER



*Smart, successful, radical government: Matthew Taylor, Bronwen Maddox and Paul Mason give their tips for Labour in power **p10** / Jon Trickett discusses his plan for preparing Labour for office **p16** / Miatta Fahnbulleh and Alfie Stirling call for an ambitious new economic agenda **p27***

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# FABIAN REVIEW

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## Fit to govern

Labour could be in power a year from now and must prepare for office, but to succeed the party's left-wing leadership must look outward, writes Andrew Harrop

**S**OME DAYS IT feels like Labour is a very long way from government. Just look as this summer's self-inflicted and shaming anti-semitism crisis. But there are plenty of other days (almost every one where Brexit leads the news) when it seems that Labour is within touching distance of power.

The chances of a chaotic emergency election are mounting fast. But the left has a lot of work to do to prepare for the challenges of government. The Fabian Review therefore commissioned advice from some very different sources. As it turns out, there are striking similarities in the 'to do' lists from the radical insurgent, the New Labour insider and the neutral technocrat.

The party must first recall Bevan's famous maxim: 'the language of priorities is the religion of socialism'. To win and to deliver in power Labour needs to focus ruthlessly on just a handful of things. The party's 2017 manifesto promised so many reforms that it would have been hard to deliver it all. Labour should focus on a few big promises that it wants to be remembered for – and is sure can be made to happen.

Labour also needs to invest in preparation and senior figures including John McDonnell and Jon Trickett are already working on transitioning to power. Future ministers must understand the government machine and help the machine understand them. They need to be ready with things they can do at once – rapid symbols of change – and know how to progress long-term reforms that will take time and outside expertise to get right.

This preparation can't be restricted to the leadership's tight inner circle. If Labour is to be ready to govern the party's leaders need to broaden their tent and this is the biggest mental shift that will be needed in the year ahead. MPs who are slated to be ministers must be given real trust, responsibility and support, whatever wing of the party they come from. And the wider parliamentary party

should be made to feel involved and invested too, because a left-wing Labour administration will achieve nothing if it can't count on backbench votes. When it comes to economic and social policy there is far more that unites Labour MPs than divides them, so all sides should start there and build bridges.

Labour's new Corbynite establishment will also need to work with the old British establishment – the civil service, military, media and business – because a few hundred people can achieve nothing alone. A majority of the British elite will accept the new government's mandate and want to make the relationship work. They're trying to deliver Brexit for the Tories, after all.

Having said that, if change is to endure, alternative, progressive centres of agency and power must also be created – local government, trade unions, mutuals, civic groups and democratic public bodies. That means not simply directing from the centre but empowering independent networks and institutions that can cooperate, experiment and lead for themselves.

There are two outstanding questions however. The first is Brexit. If Labour is in office a year from now, all its energy and attention could easily be absorbed by the EU relationship, whatever the party's radical domestic plans. If the UK is notionally 'out' by the time of an election, perhaps Labour should simply park the question of end-state Brexit and quickly agree a 10-year association agreement on EEA terms?

The second question is the governing disposition of Jeremy Corbyn himself. He will be the most unconventional prime minister for at least a century and the party and government machine must prepare for that reality. How should Number 10 work, when the prime minister is a symbol of hope more than an executive leader? If Labour finds an answer it can deliver lasting transformation; if it doesn't the Corbyn project might win office but still fail. **F**

# Shortcuts



## COMMON SENSE

Confident Labour ministers can bring people with them  
—Emma Burnell

At the 2017 election it became clear that Labour and the organisations that campaigned alongside it – such as Momentum and the unions – were able to speak to the country much more effectively than Theresa May. While the Tories managed to scrape together more seats, they did so while on a downward trajectory. They lost their impetus and Labour piled on vote share – a radical turnaround from what had happened at the local elections only a few short weeks before.

The election showed a hunger for change, that Jeremy Corbyn's leadership rightly tapped into. The truth is that unless Brexit is an almost unimaginable and immediate success (and I don't think even its most fervent believers are expecting that), then there will still be that hunger come the next election. Labour will find it easier to mobilise support by being in opposition, by being at its most radical and by the disposition of the party from the leadership to the base. We want radicalism, we want to campaign for change.

The complication lies in what to do with a Labour victory and at least five years of Labour government. How do radicals, having spent years in opposition both to the Tories and to their own government, comport themselves once they are in power? How do they govern radically, while convincing the country of their policies? How do they implement changes that see them re-elected and that change the country not just for now, but for good?

There is a temptation in government to go one of two ways. New Labour politicians exercised extreme caution in their language so that even when they implemented good, socially democratic changes, they undersold them – perhaps even mis-sold them. They didn't make a confident case

in their language or demeanor. One of the key Corbynite critiques of New Labour is its lack of radicalism, and while this is contestable on some areas of policy (not least child and pensioner poverty, where visceral differences were made in people's lived experiences), it is pretty undeniable when it comes to New Labour's presentation of those policies.

The other temptation is to retain the language of the underdog, even as you take power. The left has a diagnosis of inequality that includes not just wealth but power too. It is always fighting against an unequal system, and as such it is naturally uncomfortable when it comes to claiming the mantle of power. We speak of taking power only to give it away, and we must do just that. Both by devolving power to localities and communities, but also by ensuring that our government is driven by the will of the people, not imposing its will upon them. But to give something away you have to first be confident in your ownership of it.

Corbyn's Labour will come under attack from the right wing press and vested corporate interests who will want to undermine its programme of government. A defensive pose would be a natural one. But it is never a good position to lead a country from. There will be – in among the din – important critiques that do need to be listened to. No leader is perfect, no government gets everything right. The country will need to be led, but through persuasion, not obstinance.

A successful Corbyn government will have the opportunity to implement policies New Labour never thought it could, but new ministers must make the case for them: they must make the changes they want to implement seem not just desirable to their most ardent supporters but natural to the country as a whole. Not simply by employing left wing rhetoric and hoping it is soaring enough to carry the day, nor by knowing they have the votes in parliament to carry the day anyway.

Political success comes when the people come with you. Look at how embedded our culture of free healthcare is, for example. Thatcher could never – try as she might – kill off the NHS for good, because the argument for it has been fought and won. Labour make the argument for the NHS constantly not because the party needed to campaign on this alone, but because it reminds the

country of the radical common sense the entire project embodies. Sixty years on, ordinary voters don't remember the opposition to its creation because the argument seems too alien. That is because it was made well in the first place.

As Labour politicians seek to change the economic paradigm in the UK, rejecting the neoliberal consensus of the past 40 years, they cannot do so by expecting the flaws in the system to be their only argument. Nor can they simply make a case for reverting to what came before.

Instead, Labour must learn from the success of both Thatcher and Attlee in convincing the people that radical change was simply common sense.

In part, this will be done through results. But to achieve those results and for them to be accepted as the end product of Labour policy and not simply cyclical economics, Labour must project the confidence of power, the reassurance of government and the ability to listen and to lead.

It will be Labour's policies that change the country. But it will be how Labour makes the argument for those policies that will embed those changes for good. This could be a once in a generation opportunity to change the story of the country, as long as we know how to tell it. **F**

*Emma Burnell is acting editorial director of the Fabian Review*



## LOCAL WEALTH BUILDING

Economic models can be transformed by local leadership  
—Neil McInroy

Local wealth building and the 'Preston model' have captured the interest and imagination of local and national policy makers. This has seen a number of locations taking forward the approach and has prompted the Labour party to set up the Community Wealth Building Unit.

Local wealth building seeks to address two longstanding problems in our local economies. Firstly, current local economic development is not delivering for all. Despite some successes in our large cities, local economy policy assumes that once investment capital had been enticed (often to large metropolitan cores), wealth creation will flourish, the business supply chain will benefit and lasting local jobs will be secured. However, this assumed pathway has been found badly wanting – ‘trickle down’ and a geographic ‘trickle outward’ does not work at the scale required.

Secondly, wealth and economic gains are failing to deliver socially. The UK is the sixth largest economy in the world, and yet over half of all wealth in the United Kingdom is now in the hands of the top 10 per cent, with around 20 per cent held by the top 1 per cent. The fruits of growth are too readily extracted by the already wealthy few, rather than increasing incomes for the majority.

Local wealth building is a reaction to these failings. It is a practical, systems-based approach to economic development, in which local municipalities and other local anchor organisations seek to intentionally reorganise the economy to ensure that local wealth is more broadly held, extracted less, and has more local roots. In local wealth building, social and environmental gains are not just ‘after the fact’ of economic success, but rather built in as a ‘before the fact’ functioning of the economy.

The challenge now, is to build on these small localised successes and deliver at scale.

Firstly, it is important to note that the ‘Preston model’ is less a replicable generic ‘prototype’, but more a bespoke set of intentional actions, behaviours and policies, geared around a general set of principles. The blend of actions must vary according to local economic and social context. For instance, an area with a burgeoning economy and lots of inward investment and wealth, would have a very different local wealth building context to that where there is very little economic growth. Similarly, an area with a rich cooperative tradition would again be very different to an area where there is no such tradition.

Broadly, the principles which could be deployed include:

- Anchor workforces – large public commercial and social anchor institutions (including the NHS) seeking to adopt HR and recruitment policies, whereby they recruit more from lower income areas, are committed to paying the real living wage and build progression routes for workers.

- Anchor purchasing – anchors buy an array of goods and services. We should harness this spending power in terms of social value and buying from local enterprises, SMEs, employee-owned businesses, social enterprises, cooperatives and other forms of community ownership within the supply chain.
- Anchor land, property and assets – anchors are often major land holders and can support equitable land development (through establishment of community land trusts) and development of under-utilised assets for community use. We must also advance the role that land and property holdings, public sector pension funds, and investments play in benefitting local economies.
- Ownership of the economy – a move to more local government insourcing of services has already begun, providing security of service and more direct influence on local supply chains. Furthermore, advancing cooperatives, mutually owned businesses, SMEs, municipally owned energy companies and local banks can all enable the wealth generated in a community to circulate and stay in that locality.

On a national level, it is important that the work of the Community Wealth Building Unit is stepped up and any incoming administration should be prepared to create a context in which local wealth building can amplify and accelerate. This includes:

- A national procurement framework for all public expenditure. The purchase of goods and services within the public sector has an impact on local economies, people and jobs. We need a national procurement frame which allows for some local discretion for all local public institutions. This will support competitiveness and business development, but also advance national and local suppliers within the public sector supply chain.
- Assess the social return on national infrastructure investment. It is important that our investment focusses on growth, GDP and market return. However, we also need new criteria, which include wider social return and value – including environmental, wellbeing, local employment and community development outcomes.
- A progressive social devolution. We need to move from narrow, traditional aspects of economic development and put the social aspects of peoples’ lives at the centre of any future devolution plans. Human and social capital are the basis of a new productive, inclusive society. This would include a new devolution which sought

to advance more local control and power over national sources of social investment including welfare, education, funding for the social sector, cultural policy and arts funding.

The local fight back against the rapacious wealth extraction has begun. Local wealth building is contributing to a new democratisation of the economy which seeks to provide resilience where there is risk and local economic security where there is fragility. Any incoming national government needs to grab the opportunity and amplify this important work. **F**

*Neil McInroy is chief executive of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies*



## OWNERSHIP MATTERS

Scaling up cooperatives is radical, practical and achievable —argues Claire McCarthy

Labour’s 2017 manifesto commitment to double the size of the co-operative sector, as part of its wider vision to create an economy that works for the many and not the few, is both radical and practical.

The radicalism of the proposal stems from the recognition at its heart that ownership matters. It matters at a macro level, because an economy owned in substantial part by powerful, unaccountable, distant shareholders is an economy that has enabled a break in the link between hard work and reward for most employees; and in the link between success and executive reward at the top. Ownership also matters at a company level, because who owns a company dictates in whose interests it is run, how the spoils of success are distributed, and how decisions are made about critical issues like pensions.

So, would a Labour government with a mission to actively build an economy with a more diverse ownership eco-system, and a much larger co-operative sector at its heart, be likely to succeed? The short answer is yes – as recent independent work by the New Economics Foundation, commissioned by the Co-operative party, shows. Their report, *Co-operatives Unleashed*, recognises

that the UK co-op sector, while growing, is smaller than the co-op sectors of other comparable economies (including Italy, France, Canada and the US) as a result of entirely correctable deficits in policy, advice, incentives and promotion.

There are five proposed steps to change this. First, a legal framework tailored to the specific needs of co-operatives and which would support their further development. This has been the on-going mission of the Co-operative party over the last century but it remains a work in progress. A co-operative economy bill in Labour's first Queens speech could introduce a 'right to own', with employees having a right to put together a buy-out bid when a company goes through a transition; a legal lock on co-operative assets to ensure they are available for future co-op growth; and action on the additional administrative and regulatory burdens placed on co-operatives compared to privately owned businesses.

The second step would be to tackle the investment gap that would inevitably be a barrier to expansion. This would see a national investment bank charged specifically with providing patient capital investment to the co-op sector; new tax reliefs when co-operatives reinvest surpluses into the development of new co-operative businesses; and legislation to enable the use of mutual guarantee societies which are a common way for small business to

access finance in other EU countries but not currently legal in the UK.

Third, the government would need to establish a Cooperative Development Agency in England to provide the expertise, support and advice necessary to grow a new generation of co-operative businesses. Cooperative Development Scotland – established by the Scottish Labour government in the 2000s and the Wales Cooperative Centre which continues to receive support from the Welsh Labour government, are showing that the benefits of having a specific and expert body should not be underestimated (we see this in other countries too). Margaret Thatcher wasted no time in 1979 in abolishing England's Cooperative Development Agency. It's time to right that wrong.

Fourth, accelerating the 'co-operatisation' of existing businesses, with a particular focus on businesses which are going through an ownership transition. NEF point out that if just 5 per cent of the small and medium sized family owned business that say they don't currently have a succession plan, transitioned to employee ownership, it would lead to the creation of 5–6000 new co-operative businesses. The tax incentives for business owners to go down this path already exist, though they are not well enough understood or actively promoted beyond the brilliant work of the Employee Ownership Association.

Finally, government should build on and support the radical and visionary

work already being driven by Labour and Co-operative councillors in places like Preston and Plymouth to use strategic partnerships and procurement to support the development of co-operative enterprises in their local economies.

A government willing to take these steps could achieve a doubling in the size of the sector by 2030. One of the impacts of such a shift would be to create the kind of economy in which co-operation would more readily flourish in the future. In other words, doubling could be just the beginning.

We all rely on the owners of businesses in our economy and in our communities to make responsible decisions about the stewardship of their businesses, and the extent to which they operate in the interests of the many or the few. As our economy continues to change rapidly, as a result of social and technological trends that at times take our breath away, these responsibilities become even bigger and the social and economic consequences greater. Labour is right not to stand idly by as if government has no role in shaping this, and the good news is its commitment to build an economy in which ownership is more dispersed is both radical and achievable. **F**

*Claire McCarthy is general secretary of the Co-operative party*



## THE THIRD WAY WAS A CUL-DE-SAC

New Labour failed to challenge all-pervasive right-wing ideology —Angela Eagle MP

There is no substitute for Labour winning elections and actually governing. It is only after electoral success that we can put our democratic socialist values of democracy, equality, liberty, co-operation and internationalism into effect and change our society for the better in a fundamental and long-lasting way.

As Labour members, we should celebrate our achievements, but we must also learn from our mistakes so that we can do





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better next time. While we had much to be proud of between 1997 and 2010, the fact is New Labour had far too pessimistic an approach to governing with the landslide majority it won after 18 years of Tory rule.

This timidity was most in evidence in the development of what came to be called the ‘third way’. This was an attempt to reconcile the traditional democratic socialist concern with social justice with what ‘third way guru’ Anthony Giddens described as the unchallengeable ‘constraints’ imposed on the scope of national governments by ‘globalisation’. His solution was to suggest that progressive governments could redistribute the results produced by internationalised market forces, but they could not shape such forces or, indeed, seek to manage them for more collective ends as they were too powerful.

This meant New Labour accommodating to the market fundamentalist paradigm forged in the Thatcher/Reagan era rather than aspiring to end its dominance. It meant a Labour government concentrating (and even then, only by stealth) on the redistribution of the fruits of economic activity after the fact rather than re-engineering those results by earlier state intervention to guarantee a more equal result in the first place (sometimes referred to as ‘predistribution’).

This was an error because it meant that all George Osborne had to do to dismantle Labour’s 13-year legacy was to slash public spending, which he duly did in his very first so-called ‘emergency’ budget. Apart from the minimum wage, the last Labour government did not create long lasting institutions which projected our values into the future.

By not challenging this all-pervasive right wing ideology, New Labour underestimated the dynamic and hegemonic nature of the market fundamentalist assumptions, which are designed to crowd out all political alternatives by delegitimising them. If market forces are regarded as some kind of law of nature, interfering with their outcomes is, by definition, also somehow an illegitimate thing for governments to do. And ‘unfettered markets’ contain dynamics which massively increase the inequality which is the result of the 40-year dominance of market fundamentalist dogma.

Labour should have argued that markets do not conform to ‘natural and unchangeable laws’ but are embedded in the legal and social assumptions of the societies in which they operate. It follows then that the way markets work can be legitimately changed by governments. The scope of markets can be restricted in areas such as healthcare, utilities and education, especially to increase the common good. This can also be done globally with multinational agreements, say on tax havens or tax regimes for multinational companies.

Secondly there is a ‘social model’ of taxation which directly challenges the market fundamentalist myth that all taxation is state larceny and then, by definition, “a bad thing”. In fact, taxation is the subscription fee we all pay to live in a caring and supportive society and democratic decision-making legitimises the choices being made by the government.

New Labour chose not to make this argument but instead got into a downward auction with the Tories on income tax levels which not only narrowed the tax base but got us into a competition we could never really win and prevented us making the case for a social model of taxation.

Finally, as the deregulated labour market split increasingly into lovely and lousy jobs, New Labour did not do enough to empower trade unions and workers to protect themselves from the increasingly exploitative opportunities available to bad employers. Granting a right to recognition for trade unions was a good first step but it should have been followed up with further change and stronger, more enforceable rights at work.

Thus, as trade union density fell, real wages and living standards stagnated and more of the fruits of economic activity have gone to those who own rather than those who work. This has made our society much more unequal and, as Thomas Picketty has shown, this concentration of wealth at the very top will continue unless governments choose to dismantle it. This can be done by higher levels of income tax and effective wealth taxes. Enhanced rights at work and reviving the presence of trade unions throughout the economy will also guarantee fairer income distribution and much needed protection at work in the future. ■

*Angela Eagle is Labour MP for Wallasey and author with Imran Ahmed of *The New Serfdom – the triumph of Conservative ideas and how to defeat them**



## TIME FOR A PLAN

Building a new education system demands vision and courage

—Kevin Courtney

We need a new education programme, urgently. We need it to give a sense of focus and hope to all those across the world of education who are struggling with the effects of a system that is not merely incapable of responding to a deepening social crisis, but is actually making that crisis worse. We need it so that the next government hits the ground running, with no less speed, and much more intelligence, than Michael Gove in 2010.

Labour's plans for a National Education Service (NES) can meet these needs, if they take the full measure of the critical state our schools are in, and if they are bold enough to inspire the commitment of those who work in education and those who use its services.

It is thirty years since Margaret Thatcher's Education Reform Act established the framework of a new school system in England, a framework which no government since has tried to step outside. Parents, teachers – and policymakers – have at most only a fading memory of a different system. The patterns of our everyday work, and the horizons of our imagination, are to a large extent set by '1988'. It is difficult to imagine a system of accountability without Ofsted, of assessment without SATs, of school governance without academies.

Yet, every system reaches a point where it needs to be evaluated against the needs of a changing world, and where the promises made in its early years must be weighed against its consequences. We have reached that point in the case of the 1988 reforms. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) director for education and skills says that classroom life in English schools is focused on 'memorisation' and 'drilling'. The Education Policy Institute concludes that Ofsted systematically undervalues working-class schools and overestimates the achievement of schools with more privileged intakes. A major report from the Institute

of Education finds that a market-led school system has put finances before the wellbeing of pupils. These are profound criticisms, and they are accumulating in number and in severity: they amount to a judgement that our school system is broken.

This is a recognition that is widely shared. Much less developed is a sense of how to move forward. New Labour, especially through the eloquence of Tony Blair, David Blunkett and Michael Barber, implanted into the mindset of policy-makers on the left the idea that teachers (and their unions) were a hindrance to policy. Left to themselves, teachers would set low expectations, and be incapable of raising standards. Hence New Labour's search for policy mechanisms that could push teachers beyond what were assumed to be their natural limits: mechanisms of market competition, centralised target-setting, high-stakes testing and constant evaluation and inspection.

It will take courage and imagination to discard these fears, and the policy legacy associated with them. It will also require

### The National Education Service will need to be based on concrete proposals, not good intentions

a new way of thinking about standards, governance and accountability – and this, I recognise, is a challenge for teachers as well as policy-makers. Critique and rejection are the easy part. The difficulty arises when asked for alternatives. The NES will need to be based on concrete proposals, not good intentions.

Here are two examples of these. First, assessment: We know about the damaging effects of SATs, but the lingering, Blunkettian question is if we get rid of them, how can we monitor and improve the quality of primary education? There is no getting round the first answer to this question. Teachers have to be trusted to evaluate and support children's learning. We now know that stripping away their prime responsibility for these functions has too many ill effects. But rightly, this answer will not satisfy concerns about accountability, and about the consequences for equity at a national level of an assessment system which might be internal to the individual school. This is where the NES should draw from global experience.

The OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an

international survey which aims to evaluate education systems worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students. In 2015 over half a million students, in 72 countries took the two-hour test.

The OECD's PISA system of evaluation does not rely on testing all students in a country to make inferences about the quality of national education. Like PISA, we should use sampling across ages and subjects, to monitor national trends. At school level – as the most successful and innovative systems do – we should rely on self-evaluation, but complemented by the advice and support of local inspection services or a new HMI. Increasing trust in teachers, improving their capability, and providing them with critical support are essential to the revival of quality in primary education.

Second, the academy model has undermined democratic accountability of schools to their communities, reduced professional autonomy and discouraged effective collaboration between education professionals. The NES must take the full measure of this problem. But it is not one which can be resolved overnight. There are no well-resourced local authorities capable of instantaneously reintegrating large numbers of academies into the public sector. The NES must therefore have an immediate, as well as a long-term plan. It should learn from the example of the right, which understands how to take apparently limited initiatives, which then become the basis for systemic change.

The NES should make clear that from day one of a new government, local authorities would be able to open schools without a competition with other providers. No more academy orders would be issued. Academy schools would be able to rejoin the local authority. Legislation should rapidly follow. Schools in multi-academy trusts (MATs) would have an independent legal status and be able to leave the MAT. MATs should be democratic bodies – elected by school communities. National pay and conditions for teachers and support staff would apply in all state funded schools, whether academies or not. Admission practices should be inclusive and transparent.

Those who work in education are expecting a plan which exudes clarity and confidence, which is resourceful and realistic in the short term, and inspiring in its long-term vision. It is in this spirit that we await the first appearance of the NES. ■

*Kevin Courtney is joint general secretary of the National Education Union*

# Transitioning to power

*Matthew Taylor* was there when New Labour entered government. He offers his tips to today's very different Labour party



*Matthew Taylor is chief executive of the RSA. He was Tony Blair's head of political strategy and is writing in a personal capacity*

**T**HE IDEA THAT the advice of a former Blair insider could be considered of value to a Corbyn team preparing for power is certainly novel: "About as credible as the producer of *Love Island* being asked to edit the *New Statesman*," said my friend. But I do have some experience of bringing a Labour government into power after a sustained period of opposition. So I know something of the challenges and opportunities that await. Therefore, more in hope than expectation (and eschewing some of the more Machiavellian aspects of government), here are my eight top tips.

## 1. Under-promise and over deliver

This is hard but important. Labour's last manifesto was radical, but also an exercise in retail politics, winning over key groups like students and pensioners with specific, cashable promises. It was also almost certainly undeliverable. With the low expectations that Labour had on entering the campaign, such opportunism was understandable. Moreover, given the apparent impact of the Tories' more honest effort, it was a strategy that paid off handsomely. But Labour is likely to enter the next campaign as real contenders and possible favourites. That means more discipline.

On the one hand, Labour will come under closer scrutiny not just from a largely hostile press but also from a range of trusted commentators like the Institute for Fiscal Studies and the Office for Budget Responsibility. This time the sums will need to add up. On the other hand, if winning power is a possible outcome, the fewer specific and expensive commitments made, the better. Remember, not having a manifesto commitment doesn't stop you doing something but having one can narrow your capacity to adapt to the realities of office, not to mention exposing you if you can't deliver (ask Nick Clegg). This is where Corbyn's Labour has a useful advantage. Few people will question the radicalism of the project. Labour doesn't need to prove it will be bold, it does need to show it can be pragmatic.

## 2. Renew the mandate

Manifestos are, anyway, a blunt mandate. Most people vote with little detailed awareness of what the parties are promising and when Labour gets into office it will have to adjust its programme to its inheritance. (By the way, these first days in office are also the opportunity to use what you

have 'discovered' in Whitehall to attach a sticky and negative label to your predecessors.)

A new government has a one-off chance to refresh its mandate. About six months into office the government should organise a major deliberative process (there is lots of international good practice to draw upon) engaging the public in identifying national priorities and endorsing key, potentially controversial policies. This could and should be part of broader commitment to reform and renewal of our democratic institutions.

## 3. Use your new-found popularity

Immediately after the election every campaign, lobby group and trade association will be rewriting their programme to look like it reflects the incoming government's priorities. While it's easy to be flattered, ministers should be neither gullible nor cynical. Instead these early months are an opportunity to demand that those organisations who say they want to work alongside the new government offer action in return for a sympathetic hearing. So, tell employers they must deliver needed change voluntarily or else it will be forced. Tell councils they must come up with a strong local accountability offer if they want greater freedom and funding. Tell contractors of public services to develop progressive, transparent and binding principles for public private partnerships if they want the sector to have any role at all going forward.

## 4. Be generous, share power and widen the tent

People don't like sore losers, but they don't like vengeful winners either. Like all incoming prime ministers Jeremy Corbyn is bound to say that he will rule for the whole country and heal the divisions exposed by the election campaign. But a Labour government needs action behind these words. It may be a new skill, but choose your battles and your enemies carefully.

Whatever their politics most people in public life want to make a difference, so if you are clear on what outcomes you want, you can draw on the talent of former opponents and adversaries. This will make you look open-minded and generous, storing up legitimacy for when the old dividing lines spring up again. Some of your friends won't like it but they have nowhere else to go and, tough though it is, the team that gets you into power may not be the best team to keep you there. As the saying goes 'you campaign in poetry, you govern in prose'.



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### 5. Be bold but not frenetic

Assuming your victory doesn't precipitate some kind of financial crisis (and that's rather up to you), during the first 100 days in office it will feel like you can walk on water. So yes, this is the time to be bold (remember, for example, Gordon Brown in 1997 acting on the windfall tax and unveiling Bank of England independence) but that doesn't mean you should give a green light to any minister to announce their own reform programme. In these first weeks and months, ministers will be itching for the limelight, civil servants will have plans for every one of your manifesto promises while civil society and much of the media will want to be supportive. It is very tempting to rush out a new initiative every day. Tempting but misguided. Much better to act on a handful of bold measures than confuse people with a hundred half-baked schemes, many of which will turn out to be ill thought through.

### 6. Trust the civil service

A new government will be exciting for a civil service which has had to struggle against great adversity (austerity, weak government and Brexit). It is important not to spurn that enthusiasm. In particular, tell cabinet ministers that the special advisors they bring into government (who can often be naïve and over-zealous) are there to work with officials not to lord over them. Furthermore, insist that cabinet ministers – most of whom will be moving from running a team of five to one of many thousand – have a proper induction and on-going coaching.

### 7. Use Number Ten wisely

I recall meeting David Cameron's policy head soon after the 2010 election. When I raised the issue of working with the Treasury and Whitehall departments he said "oh that won't be problem, we're all great friends – we'll have none of the friction of the Blair-Brown days." For the next two years Number Ten was effectively asleep at the wheel while the Treasury ran Whitehall on the basis that departments could do what they liked as long as they implemented austerity. Only when Steve Hilton left and the policy team was beefed up did the centre start taking back some control. By

that time disasters like the NHS reforms were already too far gone.

In fact, the core triumvirate of Whitehall policy and spending negotiation – Number Ten, the Treasury and the relevant department – is a pretty strong foundation for decision making. Each department has their own detailed policy knowledge and stakeholder networks, Treasury focusses on the numbers and purse strings while Number Ten sees the big picture in terms of overall strategy and political management. Of course, you need to try to minimise friction and media briefing, but the system itself is robust and Number Ten should be the lynchpin.

### 8. Be proudly experimental

Some of the more interesting commentary about the emerging Corbyn-McDonnell model of governance emphasises a methodology which achieves radical outcomes by incremental experimentation rather than top-down lever-pulling, particularly through institutional innovation. This is politically savvy but it is also the right way to approach governance in these fast changing times; a bit like the RSA's approach to change (which we describe as 'think like a system, act like an entrepreneur'). If this is the way you intend to operate be open about it. Don't say you have all the answers (you don't) or promise everything will work (it won't), but invite partners to work with you to try things out and learn together what works. As radical reformers, where you get to is more important than how you get there.

Also, use the amazing power of data. We now know that New Labour's record on both reducing child poverty and increasing social mobility was world-beating, but the evidence has come far too late. Use real-time data to show progress and create positive feedback loops.

### Finally, do try to enjoy yourselves

Being in government can feel like a waking nightmare (check out the newspaper headlines from Blair's third term), but it is also an incredible privilege. And when it's over, civilian life will always feel like a bit of an anti-climax. **F**

# Prioritise and prepare

*Bronwen Maddox* offers advice to Labour on how to work with the machinery of government and why it shouldn't fear "Sir Humphrey"



*Bronwen Maddox is director of the Institute for Government*

**L**ABOUR IS CLEARLY energised by the disarray of the government over Brexit. How should the top team now prepare for the possibility of suddenly being in power, if there were a general election and Labour won? What could they do to make the transition as smooth as possible and to maximise their chances of putting a "radical Labour programme" into practice?

The Institute for Government, a non-partisan think tank, runs courses and gives private advice to ministers on how to be more effective – how to set priorities, set up their office and work with the civil service to get things done. We also work with oppositions in periods before elections on their potential transition to government. Here is my advice to Labour.

**1. Don't aim to do too much.** Labour's top team talks about three areas where it has big ambitions. The first is the radical programme itself – including the re-nationalisation of water, rail and other industries. The second is "machinery of government" change such as creating new departments for housing and labour. There has been talk, too, of changing the relationships at "the centre" – that is, between Number 10, the Cabinet Office and the Treasury. Third, there is Brexit, which looms over everything. It may not be Labour's favourite subject. But unless a new Labour government actually committed the UK to staying in the European Union, it would have to manage an exit.

Each one of these areas could absorb a government for its whole term. That is manifestly true of Brexit (as we can see now). The best advice is to make the minimum change possible to Whitehall that will still support your agenda, to avoid losing valuable time.

**2. Work out what impact Brexit will have on your time and your wider programme.** The question of the UK's relations with the EU has divided the country, the parties and parliament precisely because it raises such different visions of the future. You will need better answers in government than in opposition – and those answers will affect policies apparently unconnected to the business of leaving the EU.

**3. Distinguish between what can be done on day one and what will take years.** A Budget and tax announcements are in the first category – although working out the ramifications of changes takes a lot of analysis. "Abolishing outsourcing" (as some in Labour have mused about doing) will take a lot longer. Contracting represents around £200bn

of annual spending, on some estimates roughly a quarter of public spending. You could decline to write new contracts from your first day, but scrapping what's there is another matter entirely. Some projects and services will have proved much better value for the public than others. Analysis and evidence are needed to distinguish those performing well from the others (as the IfG is now doing). Even where a contract appears poor value, it might cost more to get out than to stay in. Yes, you are right that this is a good time (with public support) for taking stock of a 30 year experiment in using the private sector for government work. But changing course will take hard work, time and possibly a lot of money too. Think what you really want to do.

**4. Prepare your team to be effective ministers.** The shadow front bench holds talented and forceful politicians but lacks experience in office. So make the most of opposition. Put shadow ministers in the jobs they will hold in government – and keep them there. Prior knowledge of policy ideas can be done in opposition. Help them think about how to be a minister (we run courses in this precisely because it presents challenges unlike any other walk of life). How to set up an office, to run a diary, to pick advisers – these are all things shadow ministers can usefully think about in advance. What public bodies fall in which domain and do you understand their work and their degree of independence? That is not a trivial point given the complexity of modern government.

**5. One principle trumps all – don't have too many priorities.** Think all the time: if you are judged in a year's time on what you've done, what would you want that to be? Allow time for implementation – and for the way that policies evolve as they are put into practice.

**6. Consider how to work with the civil service and talk to those with experience of this.** Musings from some in Labour about whether the civil service would be instinctively opposed to a radical change in programme are misplaced. Officials in the civil service are professionals. They are there to support whatever government is chosen by the electorate. If you're sceptical that this is true, think of the big changes of philosophy and style of working that the civil service has accommodated, regardless of officials' personal views: Labour in 1945, the Thatcher government in 1979, the Blair government in 1997 – and Brexit.



It's worth bearing in mind, too, that most people employed in public service do think that government is "part of the answer". If you presume that they are against you, you do a disservice to that commitment to public service. You do need to work with them to get anything done. So explain what you're doing and why. Recognise that you are calling for a change of direction and even mindset and that it is not a moral or intellectual failing – or a sign of tacit obstruction – if they do not immediately anticipate everything you have in mind. Take the time to discuss it.

Don't be so focussed on potential obstruction by imagined "Sir Humphrey" figures that you are blind to what some think the greater danger – that officials, eager to please, say yes to you too easily. Encourage constructive challenge – early enough that you can use it well.

**7. The same goes for the military, a point to think about if you are proposing big change to Britain's defence policy.** Yes, you will get sniping from retired generals in the pages of *The Telegraph* and elsewhere. But any government does. The senior military are very conscious that they lead people who risk their lives for their country; they have strong views on its direction, and they will let you know. That is the privilege of being in power. The important point is to know what you're doing and why. So if you are going to scrap Trident, for instance, have an answer for what that will mean for Britain's place in the world and why you think that best. Have an answer for the size of the army you think the UK needs and the circumstances in which you would use it.

**8. If people tell you that something can't be done, they might have a point.** Yes, it is possible that they might simply lack your vision. Sometimes you just have to forge ahead. But respect evidence and experience – some things

have been tried in the past and the lessons of this experience are worth learning. That will save you time – and maybe, embarrassment. Don't get defensive if people call for evidence and analysis. They have a right to expect that you have thought through the policies you propose and to have considered who will lose as well as gain, all the more if you propose radical change.

**9. Recognise that government has changed a lot. It works differently even from a few years ago.**

Devolution to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is part of that. So is the creation of mayors, city regions, and changes in local government powers and financing. Within the civil service, the past five years alone have brought much more emphasis on specialisation and professional skills – finance, writing commercial contracts, pursuing digital government, human relations. Be alert to the way that relationships have changed – and are changing.

**Think all the time: if you are judged in a year's time on what you've done, what would you want that to be?**

**10. Try to keep the big picture questions in mind and have your answers**

**to them.** This is what everyone really wants to know from you – what you are doing and why. That goes for the civil service, the military, the media, the public. The clearer your narrative – and your reasoning (based on evidence) about the effect you think it will have – the easier for people to work with you and support what you are doing.

There are few easy ways ahead and no simple solutions. The UK's national finances do not currently support the level of public services that people want, even if it is not alone among modern democracies in that predicament. So explaining why you are making the choices that you are, and why you are convinced that they will work, is essential. It is why you have won a general election and are in government. **F**

# Remaining radical in power

Inertia, inexperience and insularity are the enemy of radical government.

*Paul Mason* has 10 suggestions for delivering change in power



*Paul Mason is a journalist, author and film-maker. His latest book is [Postcapitalism: a guide to our future](#)*

**S**UPPOSE THERE IS a snap election before, or just after, Brexit day? Barring unforeseen circumstances, Labour would go into that election as the biggest and most radically left-wing socialist party in Europe. But it would face obstacles.

Last year John McDonnell pledged to “wargame” the markets’ reaction to Labour’s first days in office. But the enemy of radicalism in politics is not only financial market reaction but also inertia, tradition, lack of competence, insufficient leadership skill and, for Labour, a traditions of micromanagement and centralisation going back to the Blair years.

And on top of that there is the media. Every day in office will be presented as an existential crisis for the British democracy.

With this in mind, having covered the first days of beleaguered radical governments in both Greece and Bolivia, I would offer the following 10 suggestions:

**1. Prepare assiduously.** Preparation does not mean simply knowing what’s going to be in the first Queen’s speech, who’s going to be a minister, and who’ll advise them. It means knowing what you are going to do in the first minute after the Labour leader is summoned to Buckingham Palace; and in the hour after that and the following weekend.

**2. Prioritise and focus.** Elections, especially when fought on 20,000 word manifestos and with politically diverse front bench teams, tend to reinforce the belief that politics is about a wide range of issues, beliefs, and promises. But governing is about getting a few important things done, quickly and competently. This is especially true for a left-wing government coming to power potentially in a moment of instability. In the run up to the Queen’s speech, the first week of a Labour government should be devoted to clear executive action on the burning needs and wrongs that have propelled the party to power. The appointment of a “shadow” National Investment Bank board, a new remit for the Bank of England and a clear statement of ethical foreign policy, together with the cancellation of all further outsourcing contracts from the NHS, should be enough to get the ball rolling.

**3. Avoid “machinery of government” changes.** There is a lot wrong with the current structure of Whitehall, but that is not the main thing that will stand in the way of implementing a radical Labour manifesto. Inventing new

ministries, merging them or shunting responsibilities from one to another is an invitation to civil servants to spend time not implementing the programme, and to ministerial teams to spend time rearranging the furniture. Such changes should be done mid-term, if necessary at all. Use the state machine as it exists, not as you would like to tweak it.

**4. Reassure the conservative half of Britain.** If Labour comes to power, it will face one of the most divided electorates in modern history. When Boris Johnson won the Mayoral election in 2008 he told London voters: “I do not for one minute believe that this election shows that London has been transformed overnight into a Conservative city”. That was well advised. To the hardened Brexiteers, and to the worried centrists, and above all to the fear-ridden establishment, Jeremy Corbyn should deliver a message along similar lines: “we know Britain is not a left wing country, but the philosophy of economic cruelty has failed and we want to build a new consensus of the left and right around a different model. Give us time. We will respect the institutions, the culture and traditions you hold dear, despite our critique of some of them.”

**5. Be a bit Nietzschean.** I don’t mean proclaiming yourself a superhuman – but the Labour movement’s culture tends to breed acceptance of given processes. When Ramsay Macdonald’s national government took Britain off the gold standard, a former Labour minister is said to have exclaimed “we didn’t know you could do that!”. Sometimes it would be good if a Labour minister woke up in the morning asking: what structures of exploitation and oppression am I going to unexpectedly tear down today? Let’s get the Tories saying “we didn’t know you could do that.”

**6. Clear out the old boys and girls club, whereby politicians and members of the establishment rotate in and out of jobs they regard as “given” to them in advance.** On gaining office, Tony Blair was told he had 10,000 jobs a year within his gift. Goodness knows what the figure is now. To me, the entire political and administrative class of this country feels quite tired, old and entitled; one of the functions of a Labour government – especially if various nabobs of public office start resigning in high umbrage – would be to replenish the country’s leadership strata with competent, progressive technocrats.

**7. We, the Labour movement, cannot just stand by applauding as the front bench and MPs do their jobs.**

We need a mass movement to support and help implement Labour's policies. The failure to build this was a major weakness of Syriza in Greece and major strength for Evo Morales in Bolivia. It's not about the government mobilising a movement onto the streets to support its actions, like the chorus in an opera. It's about saying to local communities "there are billions of pounds being raised or borrowed to spend in our community; what do we want to spend it on? How will we make sure the benefits come to us?" It's about creating co-ops, credit unions, workplace union groups and as the sociologist Manuel Castells puts it: networks of outrage and hope. The core of this network has to be Labour's thousands of ward branches and the trade union movement.

**8. Use the legitimate power of public information to cut through a media increasingly devoted to making money out of lies.**

As a journalist I detest the dodgy-looking local newspapers produced by councils, constantly justifying their decisions. But there is a place for clear, impartial, independently produced public information, especially in our highly mobile and multicultural society where many people don't know the rules and their rights. For example: government issued meme, video and information packs on the minimum wage, or how to avoid bogus self-employment, or the amount of money being stolen from taxpayers through

offshore tax havens would speak to strong British traditions of public spiritedness and could be easily distinguished from party-political propaganda. So would positive information films about LGBT rights, or fighting racist and xenophobic myths about ethnic minorities.

**9. Be cheerful.** When I was editing my documentary about the first days of the Syriza government in Athens, I looked glum: I told my video editor I doubted they would achieve half what they had promised. He said: "if they only do one thing they have promised I will vote for them forever". A Labour government may get its radical edge blunted, see its dreams deferred, but if a kid who would have gone hungry gets an evening meal; if a rape crisis centre reopens; if some bombs that might have been dropped don't get dropped; if a revived and modern infrastructure takes root... that's progress.

**10. Everybody with decision making power needs to subject themselves to the harsh audit of a drink in the pub, or a coffee, with Labour's working class supporters.**

Meet some nurses, some hospital porters, some servicemen and women, some engineers, some taxi drivers, some council tenants and some people on universal credit. They won't mince words. They'll tell us if we're being too radical, or not radical enough. Labour is the only national party whose leaders can have this kind of dialogue with working people – so start having it, and don't stop. **F**

# The National Pharmacy Association

The National Pharmacy Association is the representative voice, and effectively the head office for 7000 independent community pharmacies across the UK. We are passionate about keeping pharmacies in communities and the 'community' in community pharmacy.

With a bit of help from policy makers, pharmacies can step up and change the NHS for the better – massively improving patient access, medicines safety and preventative care, whilst also achieving better value for money from the drugs budget.

We are delighted to be partnering with the Fabian Society for an event at the Labour Party conference in Liverpool on 24th September – discussing the future for localism in public health. Our first class panel will include Ben Bradshaw MP and shadow health minister Julie Cooper MP.

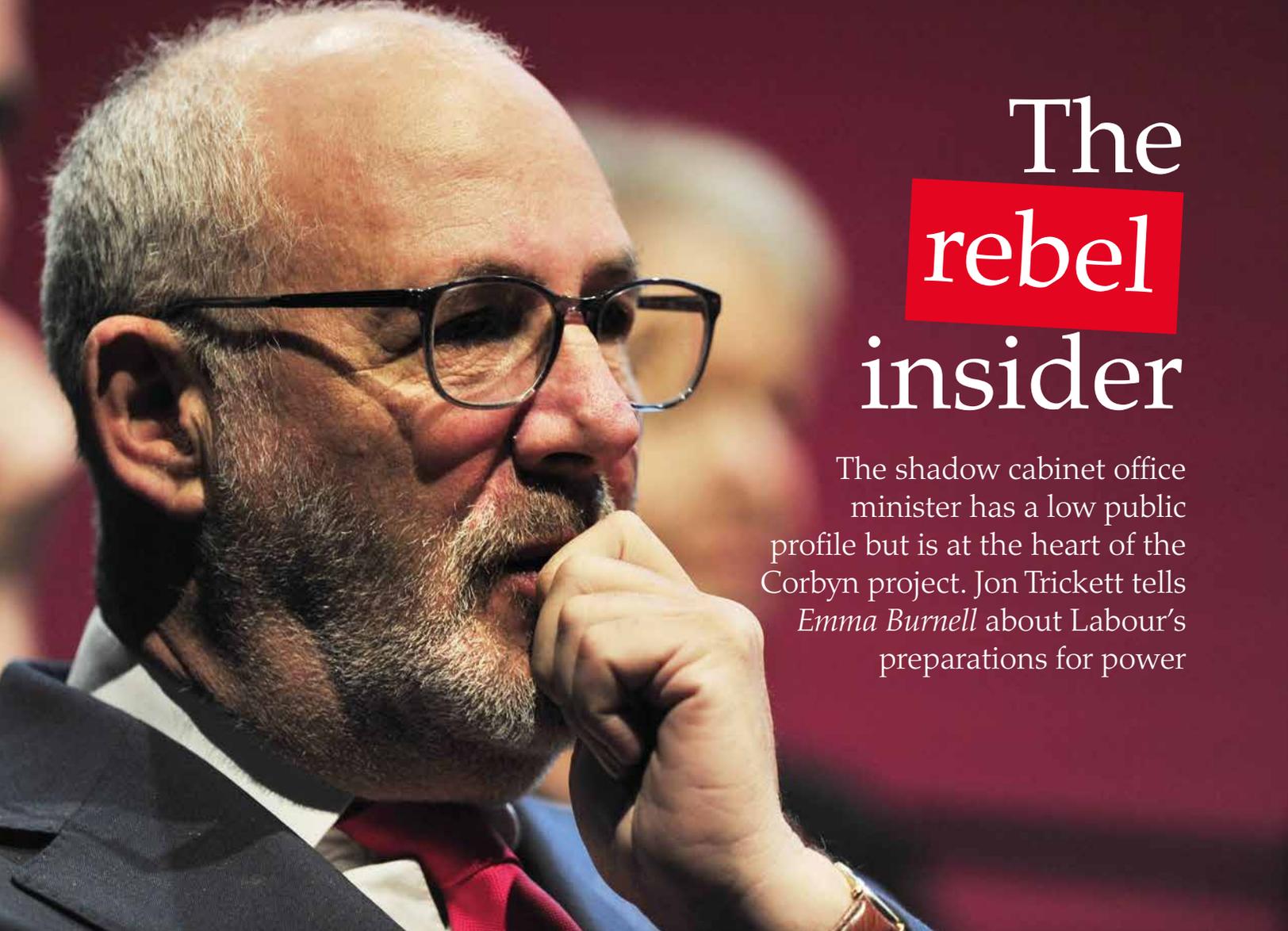
**To get in touch with the NPA:**

Email [independentsvoice@npa.co.uk](mailto:independentsvoice@npa.co.uk) or call **01727 858 687** and ask for the Communications team.

**Join in the debate:**

**1.00pm Monday 24th September,  
Merseyside Maritime Museum Liverpool  
(outside the secure zone).**





# The rebel insider

The shadow cabinet office minister has a low public profile but is at the heart of the Corbyn project. Jon Trickett tells *Emma Burnell* about Labour's preparations for power

JON TRICKETT HAS been near the heart of Labour politics since the early years of Blair. "I've had a front row seat for quite a long time now and it has been interesting." He was Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) to Peter Mandelson in the first years of the 1997 government and then much later PPS to Gordon Brown as prime minister. After the 2010 defeat, he served as consigliere to Ed Miliband, first as shadow Cabinet Office minister and then with a roving brief designed to enforce Miliband's will and keep his feet to the fire. He is now Jeremy Corbyn's 'preparing for government' powerhouse – relevant to his role as shadow minister for the Cabinet Office, placing him at the heart of planning for Labour to take office.

So how does this former New Labour insider fit into the politics of Jeremy Corbyn? In many ways that dichotomy is at the heart of who Jon Trickett is. He's an avowed left-winger, quick to tell me of the many times he rebelled in between his government jobs – especially over Iraq. But he's also a pragmatist. It makes him the obvious person to plan a transition to power that delivers Labour's radical change agenda while also taking along the country and the machinery of government.

Trickett was originally tasked with running the so-called "access meetings" with the civil service prior to the 2017 election. Usually these take place over six months giving

the civil service and opposition frontbench plenty of time to work together to think about how manifesto plans might be implemented. With the last election happening at such short notice, there were only a few weeks for this process. And that concerned him: "we want the civil service to be aware of what our plans are so they can prepare." He is also clear that a lack of planning and engagement could prove costly. "When we're in office, we don't want to waste the first six or nine months, not having prepared ourselves."

There is also the public relations question, something of which he is acutely aware. "It would be better if we indicate in advance our intentions for government. If our plans are authoritative, credible and popular, it should help us to reassure people who are concerned – as people always are – about a change of direction for the country."

Trickett has now been tasked with steering the process of not just managing a radical Labour Party into government, but making sure it is government-ready when it gets there – and with a plan informed and approved by the electorate and party members.

He's started by working with the shadow cabinet. "We've asked them to identify about five top priorities. And within those five, to then prioritise each one of them. Some things will take quite a lot of time to implement. We'll need to make an early start. And some of them will be top priority."

It is through this process of prioritisation that Trickett hopes to ensure that a Labour government will be able to be certain about what it wants to do. But he's also clear on the challenges. Any proposed policy will have to achieve two (possibly contradictory) outcomes: first to "reflect Labour party policy as determined, ultimately, by the members" and second to not entail "financial commitments which haven't been financed by our Treasury team."

The planning process is well underway. Trickett has laid out how the Shadow Cabinet will ensure not just that they know what they want to do, but how to deliver it. "We will effectively prepare a short book for each department, setting out our radical alternative to what's happening at the present time. We intend to do rough timescales and say how these ideas will be implemented... and that will be presented both to the country but equally to the civil service when we get into office, if we're lucky enough to win the election. It will mean that from day one we'll be able to make progress."

But make no mistake, this is not 1995 all over again. This isn't about trying to present the cautious message of 'responsibility' which saw New Labour mirror many Conservative policies. There will be no promises of matching Tory spending plans. Instead, Trickett sees this as part of his role in holding a future Labour government to account. "Part of the process of developing a programme for office whilst we're out of office is also about making sure that they we don't become blunted and lacking in radicalism."

One way of sustaining radicalism in office is to make sure Labour's plans have a strong public mandate. The next manifesto will be clear and, if elected, Labour will govern on it, says Trickett. "[The] intention is to know exactly what we intend to do so our politicians are clear-minded and have got robust plans which have been tested in public opinion – and also with people with relevant experience – to ensure that we don't lose our radicalism."

He is also careful to guard against institutional inertia. "If you speak to civil servants what they'll tell you is the thing that they dislike the most is lack of clarity from politicians. And I think if you speak to politicians who have been in office, what they will tell you is, if you aren't clear then the civil service agenda will triumph over the political agenda. There's no doubt whatsoever when [we] get into office, the civil service will have a book for us of all the problems which the Tories will have left behind. We have to make sure that whilst we clean up the mess which has been left, equally we can get on with the processes which we want to engage in."

Trickett was an early supporter of Jeremy Corbyn who he nominated for the leadership. He argues that Jeremy's success has three key pillars: "One was a new economic consensus; one was doing politics very differently; the third was re-evaluating the way in which Britain's relationship with the rest of the world operates."

Trickett recalls it was foreign policy that foreshortened the career of Tony Blair who he describes – particularly over Iraq – as "thinking he could walk on water." But key to what he believes went wrong was hubris. A sense that Blair and to an extent Brown weren't willing to listen and engage. "It will be my intention – and John McDonnell is already doing

this, as is Jeremy – of reaching out to all kinds of people in the wider society, engaging with them and listening to them and learning from them."

There may be those in the party who dispute that this is really happening, although it is certainly true that the Labour membership is larger and more engaged than has been the case for a long time. Trickett is keen to move that engagement beyond the membership and out into communities. During Ed Miliband's leadership, he was one of the key voices encouraging the former Labour leader to pursue community organising. But he says this approach to politics has only really taken-off under Corbyn. "The mood of the times is horizontal rather than vertical."

Making sure that communities are engaged in the policy making process is, according to Trickett, a key component of Labour's future success both electorally and governmentally. Bottom up policy making is something he's very keen on. I challenge that the party doesn't seem to have changed much in terms of the imposition of power from the top – just that who is at the top has changed. He replies "both the way in which we relate to the community and the way in which we form policy is in the process of being changed over time. Everything takes longer than you want it to. But that is the direction Jeremy's set and the way the party's moving. Our policy will develop and evolve as we listen to the public and as we listen to the Labour party. I think there is always more to do. And certainly, Jeremy's intention is to begin to transform the old party structure into what he's described as a social movement. And I'm very much in favour of that."

That doesn't mean Trickett can't see a role for control at the centre of the party.

"When you think about a political party, it needs to have a centralised system by which policy can be formulated so there aren't a dozen separate policies running." But that central party cannot simply manage away dissent either in the party or country. "In the end, politics is about hearts and minds and it's also about numbers. If you cannot secure a majority of people in the party and also the wider labour movement, and then in the country, then eventually you'll come crashing down."

This dichotomy is echoed when we discuss devolution. Labour is keen to sound radical on this issue but it's often harder to pin down frontbenchers on the details. Trickett is aware that letting go of power is easier to say than do. "From a socialist point of view, there's a tension between local autonomy and equity."

He posits the possibility of a right-wing mayor who is in charge of a devolved healthcare system deciding to stop funding sexual health services or privatising provision. A Labour government would find it hard to swallow the idea of enabling that through devolution. "I think you would want to have some common safety-net practices or frameworks established by the centre. Within that, you can say it is your job locally to make sure that the service that you are managing fits the needs of the local community which you represent and stand for."

This sounds pragmatic but may alarm both those who believe in central control and those who believe in radical devolution. "I think this wrestling between two separate

**Jeremy's intention is to begin to transform the old party structure into what he's described as a social movement**

issues which are both Labour values, left-wing values – equity on the one hand and increased local autonomy on the other – striking a balance between the two is one of those central, knotty problems we all need to think a lot more about.”

One thing he believes will help reinvigorate democracy centrally is reform of the relationship between the government and parliament. Government simply feels too remote from the governed. For example, at present he says there are too many urgent questions, because ministers have to be almost dragged to the house to explain, reluctantly what they’re doing.

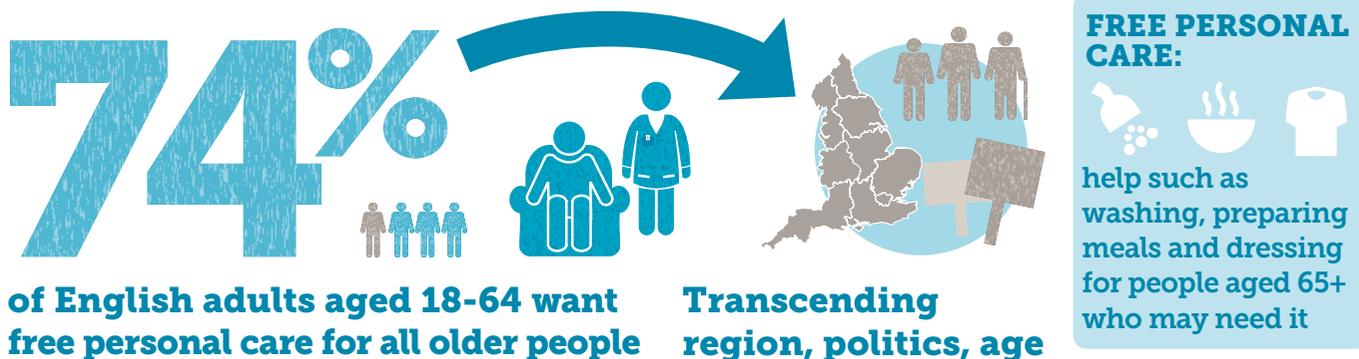
“An incoming Labour government would voluntarily come to the house with statements – certainly in the first hundred days – announcing changes in direction across a whole variety of things. So whilst the Queen’s speech is important, Jeremy wants to change the way in which politics works so that the house becomes the debating chamber of the nation.”

He also sees Labour using the house of commons more effectively now. He says Labour has been an effective opposition. “You can always do better, but I think we have been effective in showing how the current economic consensus, for example, simply isn’t working.” He also wants to see a shift towards showing not just where the Tories are wrong, but that Labour is “being an alternative government.” Trickett says: “the two things have got to be interconnected. You can’t be an effective opposition if you can’t one day govern.”

Jon Trickett has big ambitions for the next Labour government. “Because the population – millions of people – will have voted for change. So from day one they will be wanting to see progress on the various promises that we’ve made.” He outlines the shape of the programme: “Changing the way in which the economy is working has to be a core objective. We’ve made the reversal of the process of austerity a high priority and that will be the case; but we also equally want to rebalance the economy. There are some services which we believe should be back in public ownership because they are natural monopolies and provide a public service such as rail and water.”

It’s not just about big-ticket legislation. Some things can be achieved by changing the internal culture. “We want to end some of the outsourcing which has been done. Ending the privatisation of some services can be done quickly and easily by simply speaking to the procurement people and saying we’re changing direction.”

These are simple and (I return to this word again) pragmatic things a government can do with relative ease. It feels in many ways like that is what Trickett is trying to do. He is seeking to break a radical agenda down into practical steps that are both possible to implement at the heart of government and ambitious enough to change the shape of the country. It’s a tough ask, and he’s working through some of the thorniest issues. But if he manages it, he may just help Labour to write the roadmap for a different Britain. **F**



Source: Social Care Funding Poll, YouGov, 2018, Base: 2113

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# Fabian Fringe at Labour party conference 2018

	Event	Speakers include	Time/Venue	Partner
<b>SUNDAY 23 SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>Collective Voice</b> Achieving a better health and social care service	Angela Eagle MP, Becky Wright (Unions 21), Anita Charlesworth (Health Foundation), Sarah-Leigh Barnett (RCN), Jon Skewes (Royal College of Midwives)	13:00 Lecture Theatre	
	<b>Future Defence</b> Building peace and security in a changing world	Nia Griffith MP, Wayne David MP, Paul Mason, Cllr Peymana Assad	13:30 Events Suite	
	<b>Progressive Europe</b> Making social democracy a reality	Anneliese Dodds MP, Stephen Bush (New Statesman), Falko Mohrs (SPD), Olivia Bailey (Fabian Society)	19:00 Lecture Theatre	
<b>MONDAY 24</b>	<b>Community Health</b> Is health localism still the future of primary care?	Julie Cooper MP, Ben Bradshaw MP, Martin Edobor (Fabian Society)	13:00 Lecture Theatre	
	<b>Global Talent</b> Immigration and skills post Brexit	Yvette Cooper MP, Wes Streeting MP, Miles Celic (TheCityUK), Margaret Burton (EY)	17:00 Lecture Theatre	
	<b>A Nation Divided: Building a United Kingdom</b> Pamphlet Launch	James Bloodworth, Ria Bernard (YF National Chair)	19:30 Lecture Theatre	
	<b>What Are We Going To Do About Rising Women's Homelessness?</b>	Melanie Onn MP, Jo Wilson (Manchester Homelessness project), Lisa Raferty (Homeless Link), Michelle Langen (Papercup)	19:45 Events Suite	

## ROUNDTABLE EVENTS\*

\*By invitation only (events@fabians.org.uk)

**Business Taxation for Growth**



Chi Onwurah MP

**The Grey Vote**



How can Labour re-earn older people's trust?

Margaret Greenwood MP

**Millennials and their Money**



Financial services to serve generation rent

Alison McGovern MP

**Prosperity beyond big cities**



Creating thriving local economies

Jim McMahon MP

**How Can Investment in Arts and Culture Shape and Drive Local Economic Growth?**



Kevin Brennan MP

**Tax, Technology and Work**



Building a tax system in an era of automation

Anneliese Dodds MP

	Event	Speakers include	Time/Venue	Partner
<b>TUESDAY 25</b>	<b>Local Government Under Fire</b> How Labour can Respond to the Funding Crisis	<b>ClIr Clare Coghill</b> (Leader, Waltham Forest Council), <b>ClIr Michael Payne</b> (Deputy Leader, LGA Labour)	<b>08:30</b> Lecture Theatre	
	<b>Can Technology Create a More Equal Society?</b>	<b>Dr Allison Gardiner</b> (Keele University), <b>Ivana Bartoletti</b> (Gemserv), <b>Reema Patel</b> (Nuffield Foundation)	<b>08:30</b> Events Suite	
	<b>From Housing to Healthcare</b> Does Labour have a comprehensive agenda for supporting older people?	<b>Barbara Keeley MP</b> , <b>Melanie Onn MP</b> , <b>Clare Tickell</b> (Hanover), <b>Angela Kitching</b> (Age UK), <b>Andrew Harrop</b> (Fabian Society)	<b>12:30</b> Events Suite	
	<b>Should we Fear Machines?</b> The opportunities and challenges of technological change for workers	<b>Yvette Cooper MP</b> , <b>Liam Byrne MP</b> , <b>Alina Dimofte</b> (Google), <b>Paul Nowak</b> (TUC) <b>Kate Dearden</b> (Community)	<b>13:30</b> Lecture Theatre	
	<b>Labour Women</b> Job done or just begun?	<b>Dawn Butler MP</b> , <b>Olivia Bailey</b> (Fabian Society), <b>Sam Smethers</b> (Fawcett Society), <b>Sonia Sodha</b> (Observer), <b>ClIr Hetty Woods</b>	<b>17:30</b> Events Suite	
	<b>Fabian Question Time</b>	<b>Kate Green MP</b> , <b>Liz Kendall MP</b> , <b>Owen Jones</b> , <b>Ayesha Hazarika</b>	<b>18:00</b> Lecture Theatre	
	<b>Fabian Party</b>	<b>Alison McGovern MP &amp; Stella Creasy MP</b> DJ set + special guests	<b>19:30</b> Dining Room	

**Pensions for the Many**



Priorities for the next Labour government

**Jack Dromey MP**

**The Heart of the Community**

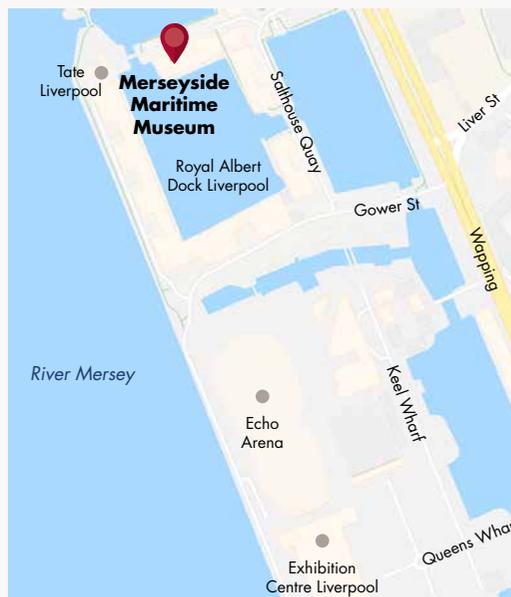


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Merseyside Maritime Museum  
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# Choppy waters ahead

The Corbyn project has rejuvenated Labour's policy debate, but victory is far from certain explains *Stefan Stern*



*Stefan Stern is a journalist and is former director of the High Pay Centre*

“Oh my God! That’s unbelievable. Oh my God.”

**L**UCY POWELL MP’S spontaneous reaction to the details of the exit poll just after 10 o’clock on Thursday 8th June 2017 summed up many people’s response to last year’s general election. A 40 per cent vote share for Labour was ‘not supposed to happen’, and indeed was ‘never going to happen’. Fifteen months later it’s unclear whether the shock has entirely worn off, or that the implications of the result have completely sunk in.

So many probably unrepeatable factors were at play during the last general election that it would be unwise to assert that for Labour, next time round the only way is up. The Conservatives are unlikely to run such a dismal, self-harming campaign again. They will probably be led by someone who actually seems to like meeting people and discussing things spontaneously. They will have a new leader, in other words.

For Labour, the novelty factor of Jeremy Corbyn as leader will have worn off. In fact it is far from certain that, should this parliament run until 2022, Corbyn will lead Labour into the next election either.

What Labour might achieve in government, in part, depends on how the 2017 election result is interpreted, and how that interpretation is borne out in the next manifesto. The 40 per cent vote share seems to have been made up of a coalition of support – of remainers determined to register dissatisfaction with the prime minister’s firm embrace of a hard Brexit, of Greens and Liberal Democrats who felt happy to lend their support to Labour to block a Conservative majority, and of loyal Labour supporters who might not have been Corbynites (and who may well not have read the manifesto) but who were keen to reject Theresa May.

It wouldn’t be right, then, to give all the credit for this unexpected surge in Labour’s vote to the manifesto alone. At the same time it clearly didn’t put too many people off either. And credit is due to a Labour leadership that has the courage to set out unashamedly bold, redistributive

social democratic positions on the economy and on education, for example, and be prepared to take on all-comers in debate.

Corbyn was entitled to stick his neck out in his conference speech last year in these terms: “Today’s centre ground is certainly not where it was twenty or thirty years ago. A new consensus is emerging from the great economic crash and the years of austerity, when people started to find political voice for their hopes for something different and better. 2017 may be the year when politics finally caught up with the crash of 2008 – because we offered people a clear choice.”

As Steve Fielding, professor of politics at Nottingham University, pointed out in his important Policy Network paper *For The Many, Not The Few* earlier this summer, Corbyn’s success has been a kind of rebuke to New Labour’s social democrats for failing to have the courage of their earlier convictions. “Blair was too afraid of reviving the Thatcherite neoliberal beast to talk up those social democratic achievements his government did have to its credit,” Fielding argued. “In many ways Corbyn is a product of social democrats’ failure to live up to their own principles,” he added.

Some senior Labour figures had perhaps forgotten a lesson that Blair’s former aide, Peter Hyman, had offered in his book *One Out of Ten*, published in 2005 and quoted by Fielding in his essay: “You cannot create a modern social democratic country by stealth. You have to argue for higher taxes to pay for education and health, argue for greater tolerance for minorities, argue for greater opportunity for those denied it. We have to build a grassroots movement that will sustain New Labour in the long term.” A grassroots movement has indeed sprung up since 2005. But it is not one that wishes to sustain New Labour.

Three out of the four leadership candidates in 2015 misjudged this mood, Professor Fielding says. “So enmeshed in attenuated social democracy and their role as

capitalism's emissaries were all but one of the candidates who sought to replace [Miliband] as leader in 2015 they queued up to describe Miliband's condemnation of the worst excesses of capitalism as 'anti-business'. This was perhaps the very nadir of post-war social democracy. The one candidate not to indulge in these attacks was Jeremy Corbyn. Instead, he criticised Miliband for being complicit with the Conservatives over the need for the austerity that had followed the banking crisis."

What would an emboldened, newly confident Corbynite government be seeking to achieve in office? They would want to demonstrate that their talk of a different kind of economy and society actually means something, and is not just a slogan designed to win applause at conference. There has been a lively and technical debate online this summer between advisers and former advisers as to how radical the McDonnell approach to the economy really is. A "fiscal responsibility rule" sounds a bit too much like the old politics to some. But as it is centred on current and not capital spending this need not be excessively restrictive in practice. Labour will not pursue a politics of austerity and there will be higher taxes for some, along with higher spending and greater investment.

Perhaps more significant have been the first signs that a new Labour government will want to explore how

a universal basic income (UBI) might work. This builds on the good work that the RSA has been doing on this subject, led by Anthony Painter.

At a time when universal credit stutters and struggles to be born – with terrible outcomes for some of those involved in the early roll-out and extended pilots of universal credit – trying to sell a new and radical reform of this kind will not be easy. There are also clear political hurdles to cross too. The dismissive Daily Mail headline treatment for unconditional income – "money for nothing" – writes itself.

David Piachaud, emeritus professor in social policy at the LSE, has set out other objections to UBI. He argues it is unjust for fit and healthy people to benefit from work carried out by others. As people's needs vary hugely – housing costs, living with disabilities – it is unfair

to award the same basic income to all. (The existing benefits system attempts to take account of this point.) UBI is more costly than the benefits system and also less efficient as it is not targeted, he argues. And, Piachaud says, it is politically very hard to deliver. His conclusion is rather damning: "citizen's income is a wasteful distraction from more practical methods of tackling poverty and inequality and ensuring all have a right to an adequate income."

So why might this nonetheless be fruitful political territory for a new Labour government to explore? Because

**Credit is due to a leadership that has the courage to set out unashamedly bold, redistributive social democratic positions**

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*Labour Party Conference Fringe Event  
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the scale of the challenge embodied in the so-called “fourth industrial revolution”, with technological change and automation representing a serious medium-to-long-term threat to millions of jobs, requires a policy response. UBI may not turn out to be a correct or feasible solution, but it helps drive and steer the conversation into the right area. There will have to be justice and decency – and where possible productive work and social contribution – for those who find themselves automated out of their current line of work. The benefits system will have to be reformed to make this possible.

This urgency has stimulated other possible policy responses – for example the concept of “universal basic services” (UBS), as developed by academics at University College London’s Institute for Global Prosperity. This is a radical extension of the principle which gave us a national health service and public housing. UBS will involve free provision of housing, food, transport and IT for those who need it. The institute has proposed “a massive expansion of social housing, free bus travel, meal provision for those most at risk of food insecurity and basic phone and internet access”. And it would be paid for (a cost of £42bn) through changes in personal tax allowances. UBS deals more successfully with the “something for nothing” charge as incentives to work for income are not undermined.

Whichever way Labour jumps on this issue a big and bold policy response seems likely. This too could reinvigorate traditional social democratic notions of redistribution and social justice.

That spirit of universalism would also be enhanced if the ideas around building a national education service (again an echo of the NHS) are fleshed out in office. Shadow education secretary Angela Rayner has not hidden her view that if resources are constrained then spending on early years should be the priority, ahead even of the admittedly eye-catching idea of abolishing university tuition fees. And there is plenty of evidence, promoted for many years by the former Nottingham North MP Graham Allen, to suggest that early intervention is most effective both in terms of cost and longer-term outcomes.

The 2017 manifesto reintroduced the idea of public ownership of utilities and other strategic national assets, and there is little sign of Labour backing away from that principled commitment. How this would be managed and paid for would vary from sector to sector and from asset to asset. Maturing rail franchises could simply be left to expire and returned to state control. Shareholders in water companies would have to be compensated, however, and agreeing a price and a deal structure will be difficult – but not impossible. Priorities, the state of the economy and of course ‘events’ will determine the rate of change and the levels of success.

All the above is based on the possibly heroic assumption that a new Labour government will have a majority in the House of Commons, and that peace and harmony will blossom on the Labour benches. You would get a pretty good price on that outcome at the bookies at the moment. The once happy electoral hunting ground of Scotland seems unlikely to deliver many Labour MPs next time round. Some traditional Labour voting areas are yet to be convinced to stay loyal – seats such as Mansfield and Middlesbrough South went blue last time round, with



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several other near misses. Brexit is a great unknowable, of course, and some Leave voters may reject Labour in certain seats if they feel the party’s commitment to Brexit is doubtful or less than total – although there was evidence over the summer that other leave voters in key seats are having doubts about the wisdom of Brexit.

And then there is the question of leadership. This summer’s ongoing sorry mess over the issue of antisemitism has called into question not just the good faith of the leadership, but also its basic competence and judgment. One Labour veteran told me this summer: “I’m not saying the lunatics have taken over the asylum. It’s more like the amateurs have taken over the asylum.” The issue of antisemitism should not have been so badly handled, for such an extended period of time. And this of course was all happening with the party in opposition. In government decisions would have to be taken more firmly and much quicker.

A party that is serious about getting into government ought not to have acted – or failed to act – in this way. The Labour party could produce the most scintillating, inspiring manifesto in the history of modern British politics at the next election, but if voters do not think the party displays competent leadership then the result will be no better than last time, and could possibly be a lot worse.

Corbyn has to be honest with himself, the party and the country. If he wants to be prime minister he must act like it. If he does not he should make way for somebody else who really does want, and is able to do, the job. Because, finally, that’s the other prediction we could make: a minority or coalition government with uncertain leadership will not be a pretty sight, and could set Labour’s cause back for a generation. **F**

# Fit for purpose

Electoral law needs to change to keep up with technology says *Roy Kennedy*



*Roy Kennedy is a Labour peer and a member of the Fabian Society executive committee*

ELECTORAL LAW IN the UK is in a very unsatisfactory state. The current position of the government is that they need to wait for various court cases, inquiries and reviews to complete before deciding what to do. But this leaves us with a system that is – at best – ineffective.

Advances in technology and their application in elections, referendums and campaigns has put a huge strain on the law, which is manifestly failing to ensure our elections are free from undue or malign interference. This is making it excessively difficult to deliver, as far as practically possible, a level playing field.

The principle legislation covering elections and their local campaigns is the Representation of the Peoples Act 1983. It is 35 years old and was put on the statute book when the war between VHS and Betamax video recording systems was still in full swing. The first Apple MacIntosh computer was still in development and would not be launched until 1984 and the first home laser jet printer was yet to go on sale.

That is the problem: our world has changed beyond all recognition over the last 35 years but the law covering our elections has not.

As a young activist and election agent in the 1980s I can still recall my delight in being able to purchase the address labels for all voters in the constituency and explain to members that we no longer needed hand written envelopes as sticking on the labels was more efficient and saved us lots of time.

Whereas today's election agents, after signing off the election address proofs will often not see the finished product until it arrives through letterboxes having gone direct from the printer to the Royal Mail.

The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 regulated donations and campaign finance, introduced national spending limits for parliamentary and assembly elections and established the Electoral Commission as an independent regulator. This was a welcome move but again the speed of change has outpaced this legislation in many respects.

Initially the Electoral Commission was set up on the basis that no one could serve as a commissioner or be employed by the Electoral Commission if they were or had

been a member of a political party. The effect of this was to deny the Electoral Commission valuable insight into political parties and political campaigns, and when that decision was relaxed I served for four years as the first Electoral Commissioner nominated by the Labour party. The Commission has to be central to addressing these issues. That will need to include considerable reflection on their part on how to address problems as a regulator with a much more nimble approach.

Today, by using social media platforms and data, we have the ability to send targeted advertisements to individuals directly. This has brought a whole new level of campaigning to the fore and engaged with people in a way that putting a leaflet through their letter box had long since failed to do.

These advertisements often include graphics and video messages from candidates or endorsers, address very specific and very local issues and seek to get a response from the recipient.

Modern campaigning is evolving as new innovations in marketing and the use of data are applied to elections and political campaigns. The important thing is to have easily enforceable legislation that requires the data to have been collected legally, that ensures it is clear who is sending the material to the recipient and that imposes a proper audit trail to confirm who is responsible for the material and what they have paid for it.

Social media platforms such as Twitter or Facebook have not been as responsive as they should have been in ensuring the content they host conforms with current requirements. We will need clear legislation to set out their responsibilities in making sure our elections are free and fair. Their role in playing an active part in protecting our democracy cannot be understated.

We have to ensure not only that advertisements and messages posted during the short campaign are compliant but also in the longer regulated period where considerable sums of money are spent by political parties and campaigns.

Each organisation involved in the process must take responsibility and not pass the buck. The suggestion that as a technology platform there is no responsibility for content

cannot be accepted. The Royal Mail examines every election address it delivers and will only deliver those that it has approved against a set criteria. This has proved to be no problem for political parties in the United Kingdom and ensures a basic standard all have to adhere to. This could and should be replicated with social media. Dealing with political parties and regulated campaigners and campaigns is a challenge but one that can be delivered.

An even bigger challenge is how to address the fake news operations which deliberately send out falsehoods, mistruths and lies. They do so with the specific intention of getting them accepted as 'the truth', to malignly impact on public opinion and ultimately people's voting intention, with the active support and amplification of Twitter trolls and bots.

The real problem is that by the time these are rebutted with the less interesting truth, there is no possibility of it being accepted as such. Labour in the mid 1990s became very effective at countering material that was not true. But the challenge today is that everyone who wants elections and campaigns fought on the facts and on the truth rather than lies is failing at ensuring this. Where it is proven that these operations are in business to distort our democracy with fake news and lies then the power to prevent them from operating in the United Kingdom should be granted to the Electoral Commission.

The use of 'dark ads' funded by organisations, individuals and foreign money who want to keep their identity secret is a particular problem in spreading fake news. To address this we need to have complete transparency on who is funding what on social media platforms with respect to elections and political campaigns, all year round. We have to legislate to set out who can post election advertisements and every one of them should say who is responsible for it, how they can be contacted and confirmation that the source of the funding comes from a legally permissible source within the United Kingdom.

Where an individual or organisation is not prepared to provide that information the advertisements could not be posted as they would be illegal. Where they are posted, the Electoral Commission should have the power to require the social media platform to remove them within the hour and provide it with the identify of who's behind them. The commission also needs the ability to issue an immediate desist notice to prevent further postings and to prosecute those responsible for such advertisements through the criminal courts.

The challenge we face in protecting our democracy is greater today than at any time in our history. We all need to play our part to protect it. Government, opposition, political parties, civil society, campaigns and campaigners can come together to agree the rules that will deliver the free and fair elections we all cherish. **F**

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## HELPING BRITAIN



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# The economic alternative

A decade has been wasted since the banking crisis, but economic change may finally be coming explain *Miatta Fahnbulleh* and *Alfie Stirling*



*Miatta Fahnbulleh is chief executive and Alfie Stirling is head of economics at the New Economics Foundation*

TEN YEARS AGO this month we watched as Lehman brothers went under and the economy as we knew it teetered on the brink of collapse. The ensuing crisis exposed the weakness of the economic system and the limitations of the neoliberal model that underpins it. For many of us it was a wakeup call – a sign that a major shift in our economy was necessary.

A growing movement of people began calling for change – from Occupy, which protested on the steps of St Paul’s in London, to the Post-Crash Economics Society at Manchester University which demanded that economics be taught differently, to UK Uncut which protested against cuts to public services that penalised millions of people for a crash they did not cause. This movement chimed with a wider public sentiment that was unhappy with how the crash had come about and the way in which ‘ordinary’ people were paying the price for mistakes that just weren’t theirs.

But rather than catalyse the change that was needed, public policy shored up an economic system that was failing. Bank bailouts, quantitative easing and then austerity all ensured that big global firms were largely protected in the aftermath, while those on low incomes paid the price. A decade on and the repercussions of this failure to act have begun to bite. For the first time on modern record, ‘economic growth’ has stopped delivering a pay rise for most people. As a consequence, the present decade of wage stagnation is forecast to continue until deep into the 2020s, making this the longest period of earnings stagnation for over 150 years. Wealth continues to be concentrated at the top, with the richest 10 per cent now owning 45 per cent of the country’s wealth while the poorest half of households own just 9 per cent. A typical chief executive now earns 120 times the average wage, and recent data from the CIPD showed their wages rose on average by 11 per cent in the last year, vastly outstripping the wages of most workers. We have also seen an almost 30 per cent rise in insecure, often low paid, work over the last five years.

At the very time when people most needed protection from an economy that wasn’t working for them, the traditional sources of support have been cut to the bone. And

this austerity continues to come. In April this year, a further £2.5bn was cut from the social security system, the second largest annual cut since the financial crisis.

If the economic trends of the last decade continue into the next, the breakdown of the current economic system may become inevitable – particularly when combined with an environmental crisis that is in part its making. We are now consuming the earth’s resources at 1.5 times its ability to regenerate them. Water shortages, the erosion of arable land and the loss of biodiversity are all set to impact on our day to day lives. We are increasingly subjected to extreme weather conditions with the environmental audit committee warning of 7,000 heat-related deaths every year in the UK by 2050 if the government doesn’t act quickly. And efforts to mitigate climate change, such as the Paris agreement, simply cannot compete with a global economic

model which fails to distinguish between different directions for growth – namely those which can harm the planet and those which can support it.

It has been a decade in the making, but change may finally be coming. The clearest sign of this impending revolution is that more and more people

continue to express their distaste for the status quo. The public tolerance for a system that does not work for so many is waning. And people are searching for alternatives as distrust in our political and economic institutions grows. Populist parties and movements have emerged to exploit people’s understandable anger at the lack of any sign that governments are capable of making things any better.

That is the challenge facing all political parties at this moment. How can you fix a broken economic model while people fundamentally distrust your ability to do anything about it? The answer to this question is not obvious, but parties must find one if they are to remain relevant and appeal to an electorate which is fast losing any faith in the ability of the political system to make a difference to their lives.

The real danger is that this crisis of distrust consumes all attempts to fix our broken economic model. Gone are the days when a new government can come into power with an economic programme, implement it, and expect people

**It has been a decade in the making, but change may finally be coming**

simply to go along with it. Distrust of government and other political and economic institutions is simply too high. The only way to build a new and better model to replace the one which has caused so much social, economic and environmental damage is to do it *with* people, and not just *to* them.

That automatically discounts two of the more conventional responses to our economic malaise. The first is simply to try to curb the excesses of our broken model – to redistribute a bit more, to regulate a bit more but otherwise to keep on riding the tiger. That approach has been tried to death, and people won't buy it any longer. The second is to retreat to the comfort of a centralising model which vests all power in the state to control the economy and our lives. Again, the requisite trust between people and political institutions simply isn't there.

A vision for a new political economy ought to be based on the things that really matter to people. It should be committed to a thriving and healthy environment, better living standards and less inequality. It should seek to build space for progressive enterprises to thrive, and to curb the practices of business which works against our environmental and economic interests. But perhaps above all, it should be committed to doing things which will genuinely empower people. That means encouraging greater common and cooperative ownership, building a decentralised and active state, and driving powers down to the level of communities where people know best.

The state needs to use its democratic and policy apparatus to help choose and set the direction of the economy.

Future structural demand in the economy will increasingly be shaped by the growing health and care demands of an aging population, the need for work that isn't easily automatable and the imperative for a transformation in industry to avert and mitigate the environmental impact of people. Policy needs to set the economy on a trajectory that can meet these needs. For example, public care provision needs to be significantly expanded and integrated into industrial strategy as part of a plan to create high quality, human-centred, low-carbon jobs.

In doing this, the state also needs to push powers away from markets – and where appropriate away from itself too and towards cooperative forms of ownership, organisation and production. Legal and economic reform in support of alternative ownership will be key but so too are policies that give people more time and a shorter working week. The two combined will empower people to engage in economic activity outside of the state or market, if they choose to do so.

The hardest part will be to pursue a genuinely transformative policy programme while always staying rooted in the real lives of the people most affected. But as distrust rages and more and more people abandon hope that politics can change their lives, that is the most important part of all. A new economy will not come about just by pulling levers from Westminster and Whitehall. It will come about by people taking ownership of their future in every community in the country. Then, and only then, can we call time on our broken economic model. **F**

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## Brexit, Ireland and the English Revolution

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# Turning the tables

Injustice in our labour market is home-grown and can be fixed if we give workers power, argues *Faiza Shaheen*



*Faiza Shaheen is director of CLASS*

**E**MPLOYMENT NOT ONLY takes up the majority of our waking hours and defines our quality of life, it is inextricably linked to both our physical and mental health. In other words, when the labour market stutters, we all stutter. In recent decades our labour market has become a major source of inequality and societal problems. Work is no longer a guaranteed route out of poverty. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimates 3.7 million workers are living in poverty and the majority of children living in poverty are to be found in a working household. Real weekly wages remain lower today than they were before the financial crisis.

Meanwhile, precarity is seeping up the income distribution ladder to the extent that financial insecurity has become the new normal. CLASS research conducted earlier this year found that up to three quarters of the working population are of the opinion that 'the economy is not working well' for them. We spoke to union representatives that told us shocking stories of mental health workers themselves suffering from mental health problems. The same study found that more people than not felt that employee voice in the workplace was diminishing.

Many of us will agree that there is rot beneath the headline employment figures that tell us our labour market is performing well – but we remain split on how to tackle the problem. After more than a decade of working on the issue, I've come to see that the challenge of re-shaping the labour market requires far more than the 'sticky plaster' policy we've become accustomed to – we need an overhaul of power in the workplace.

It is not a coincidence that as low pay and precarious working has soared, the role of trade unions has diminished. Decades of draconian legislation have impinged upon fundamental workers' rights so that today trade union density stands perilously low. At the same time, legal loopholes and exploitative employers leave millions of workers in a position where they cannot challenge their bosses over infringements of the minimum wage and other basic entitlements.

Many will be reading this and wondering why I'm starting with the issue of power and unions. The mainstream narrative has been that it is globalisation alongside technological change that has resulted in growing income inequality and declining labour market conditions.

The basic explanation of how globalisation is driving economic inequality is that opening up economies to developing countries undermines the position of low-skilled workers in richer nations. On the other hand, skill-intensive sectors become more concentrated in higher-income countries where a greater proportion of the population is highly qualified. Fewer opportunities for those without many formal qualifications, alongside more opportunities for those with graduate skills, lead to a growing gap in labour market fortunes.

Despite its popularity as an explanation for increased income disparities, the data on globalisation does not suggest that it is the central factor. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's statistical analysis found that higher imports from low-income countries only caused wage dispersion in countries with weaker employment protection legislation. Furthermore, the lowest wages and poorest working conditions are not found in sectors where jobs are at risk of flight overseas to cheaper labour markets, but rather in the care and hospitality sectors where jobs, by their nature, remain within the domestic economy.

The inability of globalisation to explain the growth of economic inequality has a silver lining – it opens up the space for domestic policy discussions and solutions. If globalisation were key to driving economic inequality, then tackling it would require measures to reverse globalisation – while this maybe President Trump's approach, most consider it undesirable.

The scope of change brought about by automation and technological advancements demands serious policy attention now and into the future. Yet here too we find reason for hope – after all, all high-income countries have been subject to these currents of change, yet many have managed to avoid a dramatic decline in workers' rights and conditions.

We are not simply at the whims of globalisation or technological innovation, we can choose to shape the impacts of these drivers. The state of the labour market is a policy choice. Uber can be a co-operative owned by its drivers!

## **Where next for the UK labour market?**

Henry Ford famously said "there is one rule for the industrialist and that is: make the best quality of goods



possible at the lowest cost possible, paying the highest wages possible." It seems that this logic – one of making products that your own staff can afford to buy – has been lost in the modern age. A new vision for our labour market must replace our current race-to-the-bottom approach on pay, workers' rights and regulation. For too long the state has shirked its role in supporting robust labour market institutions. As a consequence, the imbalance of power between employers and employees (as well as between capital and labour) has tilted too far toward the former. Where to start? The first and most crucial step is addressing the lack of power and voice workers have in the workplace. While the right to join a trade union, right to strike and right to collective bargaining are set out in a number of international declarations, the UK policy environment is far from conducive to the realisation of these rights. The Trade Union Act 2016 forced further cumbersome regulations onto trade unions in the form of a 50 per cent turnout for industrial ballots to be deemed legally valid and a 40 per cent support threshold among all workers eligible to vote. The PCS union was recently denied the right to strike after their highest ever yes vote and turnout in history because of this legislation.

New trade union legislation must be accompanied with active promotion of collective bargaining at a sectoral and firm-level. The Institute of Employment Rights has called for a Ministry of Labour, headed by a minister with a seat at the cabinet table to provide a voice for the UK's 32 million workers and the power to roll out sectoral collective bargaining. An important component of this is to establish Sectoral Employment Commissions (SECs) to regulate minimum terms and conditions within specific sectors of the economy.

Further reforms to outsourcing and public procurement practice would also bolster the trade union movement. Amongst the 20 point plan for workers' rights in the 2017 Labour manifesto, there were calls for public procurement contracts to only be awarded to companies that recognise trade unions. To avoid further infringements around workers' rights and the 'fissured workplace', the TUC have

called for a system of 'joint and several liability' so that companies have greater legal responsibility for infringements of workers' rights across their supply chain and other business entities.

Another way to bolster worker voice is to have workers on boards. There is a whole variety of evidence that this measure promotes good corporate governance and some form of employee representation at board-level remains the norm across Europe. CLASS research has previously highlighted the need for trade union involvement in the process of establishing workers on boards and the idea had gained traction. While running for office, Theresa May pledged that we were "going to have not just consumers represented on company boards but workers as well." Unfortunately, the idea has since been scrapped.

It is important however that workers on boards are not used as a tool for circumventing union involvement in the workplace. This policy should be implemented alongside appropriate collective bargaining mechanisms. Finally, changes should be made to the law that currently prioritises maximising shareholder value in the running of companies at the expense of all other stakeholders.

We also need to be thinking about alternative models of ownership. Almost half of UK company equity is owned abroad and just over 12 per cent is owned by individuals. Transferring businesses to cooperative ownership requires a sustained shift in policy towards an environment that would allow co-operatives to thrive. The work being done in Preston on local community wealth building is a good example of one successful approach.

In light of automation and the pressure it may put on job numbers, we also need to consider what we are spending our hard earned wage packets on. Reimagining the labour market means also reimagining the housing market as well as the welfare system to ensure we support people when they need it.

Compared to many of our European neighbours and our own past, this 'to do' list is not particularly radical. The main task is to convince people that a better world is not only desirable, but possible. ■

# Books

## Connecting the dots

Danny Dorling brings a geographer's eye to the study of inequality but is never overly wonky, writes *Sarah Sackman*



*Sarah Sackman is a public law barrister and member of the Fabian Society executive committee*

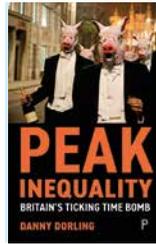
Inequality is the key political issue of our time and in this book, Danny Dorling consolidates his status as one of the most important scholars of inequality in the United Kingdom today. Since the 2008 crash increasing evidence has emerged of the damaging societal effects of inequality. Dorling's work takes its place among books such as Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett's *The Spirit Level*, Thomas Picketty's *Capital* and Michael Marmot's *The Health Gap*, which explain how less equal societies are less trustful, less safe and less healthy.

Dorling contributes a geographer's perspective to the debate. Whether writing about the 2011 London riots, parliament's location, or the allocation of infrastructure spend, Dorling shows "there is a geography to everything about politics". Through his cartography, Dorling challenges us to think about inequality spatially, reflecting a society in which the rich distance themselves, in every aspect of life, from the poor, whilst simultaneously making poor people poorer.

This book will feel familiar to fans of Dorling's work. It combines new material with a selection of his writing which has previously appeared in journals and newspapers. As a result, chapters are short, packing the sort of thought-provoking punch you would expect from an op-ed. The upside is that each chapter is pithy, standalone and makes an argument, the downside is that the material sometimes fails to flow as a single coherent work.

Yet Dorling's overarching theme remains clear: the United Kingdom has reached a watershed of inequality, the highest of anywhere in Europe. And unless we agitate for radical change, we should not expect an end to extreme inequality. "We are now at the peak and starting on our way down. It's a long way down", Dorling writes.

Despite being packed full of data tables and graphs Dorling's writing is never overly wonky. The best parts of the book chart the unexpected connections between inequalities. In a chapter entitled "London and the English desert", for example, Dorling compares maps of Arts Council funding, English housing wealth and distance from nuclear power stations. Each map looks remarkably similar, suggesting the geography of inequality pervades every aspect of cultural and economic life.



**Peak Inequality:**  
Britain's ticking time bomb  
Danny Dorling  
Policy Press,  
£12.99

The chapter on housing inequalities resonates with my own experience as a public lawyer and housing campaigner. Dorling's assessment that housing has become the defining political issue of our time is spot on and his descriptions of British segregation through housing, the rise of renter and rentier classes, and his reminder that buying a home has always been hard except for a single golden generation lucky enough to buy between the early 1980s to mid-noughties, are excellent.

Dorling is refreshingly passionate about his leftist politics. He cannot resist taking personal potshots at Thatcher, Cameron and Blair (saying of Thatcher she married "for financial advantage" and "died all alone" in a posh hotel). Whilst these will no doubt delight a left-leaning readership, they can sometimes seem gratuitous, distracting from the otherwise persuasive argument which could, and perhaps should be targeted, as much at those in the political middle ground who need to be convinced of the need for radical measures to tackle inequality. That's important because as Dorling himself acknowledges, even if inequality has peaked, it can only begin to be addressed if we take bold steps to change things.

Diagnosing the problem is one thing, tackling it is another. I wish the book had offered more concrete policy ideas for addressing the inequalities it superbly describes, but that is not Dorling's project. Instead his call is for a broader democratic socialist revival. He argues in his final chapter (based on an article written before the 2017 election) that under Corbyn (someone he describes admiringly as a "listening man" who is "not in it for the money") the Labour party, "represents a set of beliefs whose time has finally come".

Is he right? Certainly Dorling's thesis that inequality generates grievances which drives people to support more radical politics rings true. Labour's 2017 manifesto signalled a leftist social and economic agenda which was capable of inspiring millions. Yet the same grievances about inequality can equally be seen as fuelling the referendum result and contributing to rise of a populist right. Dorling is surely right that extreme inequality will define our politics in the coming decades but predicting exactly what comes next is a fool's game. **F**

## A bitter pill

Austin Mitchell's memoir of an unconventional Westminster life makes for sad reading, says *Nick Butler*



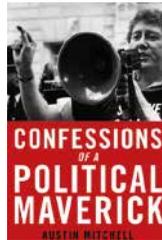
*Nick Butler is a vice president of the Fabian Society and was the society's treasurer from 1982 to 2012*

Being a backbench member of parliament is hard work. The glamour of the letters after your name soon fades as you realise that advancement depends on obedience to the whips and loyalty to the party leader, that your working conditions are awful, and that there is intense scrutiny not just of your expenses but also of what is laughably called your "private life".

Austin Mitchell did not go into politics through any of the normal routes and was therefore perhaps unprepared for life at Westminster. He wasn't a local councillor, or a trade union official, or a special adviser to a member of the Cabinet. He was chosen to fight the 1977 Grimsby by-election because he was a well-liked local television presenter. At a moment when Jim Callaghan's government was in trouble, Mitchell was seen as one of the few people who could keep Grimsby Labour.

From the evidence of this book Austin never came to love being an MP. Being told what to do and what to believe was contrary to his whole character. It was even more difficult because he was never, from 1979 onwards, aligned with the prevailing views of the party. Its attachment to orthodox economics cut across his belief that most economic problems could be solved by devaluation and deficit spending. He was never deferential enough to enter the tight circles around the leading players. Being ignored by successive party leaders – every snub is recorded here in painful detail – provoked disillusionment. Austin is no hard left-winger, but his unwillingness to see anything positive in the things the Labour government did between 1997 and 2010 is exactly the sort of posture which led to the election of Jeremy Corbyn in 2015.

The book opens with Enoch Powell's famous line about all political careers ending in failure. Austin's destiny was the opposite – his career ended with success with the vote for Brexit in the 2016 referendum. Even in this moment of triumph, however, he seems to find little satisfaction or pleasure. The book contains a predictable chapter full of vitriol against the European Union and all its works. The hostility – hatred would be a better word – is clearly influenced by the effects of the common fisheries policy on Grimsby; but the origins of his views clearly go further back and are left unexplained. For whatever reason, Europe became Austin's personal crusade and left him standing alongside such people as Aaron Banks, Nigel Farage and Paul Dacre in the campaign for Brexit. Lenin



**Confessions of a political maverick**  
Austin Mitchell  
Biteback Publishing, £20

described Bernard Shaw as a good man fallen among Fabians. Austin Mitchell is a good Fabian fallen among fruit cakes.

This book is a record of one man's growing disillusionment with the political system, parliament and with the individuals involved – especially, it seems, those on his own side. Austin loves the sharp one liner but comments which aim to be witty curdle into bitterness and become quite unnecessary personal attacks. Disagreeing with Gordon Brown's policies is one thing, but to describe him as "indecisive, insecure...clumsy...a man who revelled in being adored by the city" is simply gratuitous. Almost no one gets a good word. The Fabian Society's decision not to publish one of Austin's pamphlets leads him to describe us as having been "taken over by young aspirants on the make" who transformed the organisation into "Gordon's publishing house". That is laughable and, for the record, quite inaccurate. The many papers and articles by Mitchell which the Fabians did publish go unmentioned of course.

To campaign against the party's decision to choose a woman as his successor as MP for Grimsby on the grounds that the town was not modern or metropolitan enough to be ready for a woman is pathetic, as the Grimsby electorate confirmed in 2015.

The net result is a sad book, a raw expression of frustration and disappointment from someone who probably thinks that the decision he took when asked to stand in the Grimsby by election in 1977 was the wrong one.

I hope that Austin Mitchell will not be remembered for this book because there is, or certainly was, another Austin – the man with whom I served on the Fabian executive for more than two decades and who was my predecessor as chair of the society in the mid-1980s. Then and later when I was a Labour candidate for a seat only a few miles from Grimsby he was a good friend – warm, hardworking and unfailingly helpful. At every meeting he would take photographs capturing happy moments – somewhere there must be thousands of them. We used to discuss Europe in the friendliest way – I wanted reform, he wanted to leave. We would also debate the virtues of proportional representation – a cause he supported about which I was sceptical. We didn't agree but the debates were never bitter or personal. Every exchange ended with a laugh. That is the Austin I want to remember. **F**

## Crying wolf

To some on the outside, the Fabian Society has a sinister reputation, as *Vanessa Singh* discovers



*Vanessa Singh is acting editorial officer at the Fabian Society*

If you were asked to describe the aims of the Fabian Society, what would you say? You might refer to socialism, or gradualism, inciting debate or influencing policy. But what about our secret quest for world domination? Or our agenda to infiltrate every corner of society? Because if this question was posted on the internet, that's the response you could expect.

Countless blogs, threads and YouTube videos titled "beware of the Fabian Society", "the truth about the Fabian Society", "the Fabian Society EXPOSED" and so on, reveal the sheer number of people posting online about the society's supposedly nefarious intentions. Welcome to the world of Fabian conspiracy theories ...

As an overview, most Fabian conspiracies have right-wing undertones and tend to be fuelled by a staunch opposition to socialism. This disdain for a socialist society then results in the claim that the Fabians are "working to destroy Western civilisation".

Largely, Fabian conspiracies can be put into two categories: those that claim the society want to dominate the world, and those that believe it is already successfully doing so. The latter, in my opinion, are much more fascinating. Here, the society is described as a powerful global actor that 'captured' and now 'controls' not only the Labour party, but the entirety of British society – with a particularly strong hold over the working classes.

Websites also lay out, in immense detail, how the Fabian Society influences multinational corporations, or how it represents the financial interests of global institutions such as the United Nations. Needless to say, despite some fairly busy periods, this is considerably more dramatic than any day I've had at Petty France so far.

And yet, there is one key detail that seems to fuel this suspicion and paranoia the most: the society's original coat of arms, the wolf in sheep's clothing. Featured on George Bernard



© LSE/Nigel Stead

Shaw's famous Fabian Window, the emblem has given the society a somewhat sinister reputation to those on the outside.

Though it hasn't been used for many decades, the original coat of arms was intended to symbolise the society's rejection of violent revolution in favour of cautious, evolutionary change. The wolf in sheep's clothing was therefore a metaphor for gradually advancing socialism. Yet, many see it as proof that the Fabians are concealing a dark agenda and 'deadly intentions' whilst fronting as an

**Fabian conspiracies can be put into two categories: those that claim the society want to dominate the world, and those that believe it is already successfully doing so**

'harmless institution'. As one website reads, it is "chillingly clear that the Fabian Society is a devious, subversive organisation".

Another site claims the society's objective is to manipulate "education, culture, the economy, the legal system and even medicine and religion". And a third is convinced that our ultimate goal is world governance. Quite impressive, if you consider the size of the staff team.

Conspiracists also regularly tie the Fabian Society to other organisations shrouded in mystery and mistrust. American right-wing conspiracy theorist Fritz Springmeier, for example, claims that the Fabian Society is, in fact, 'a prominent member of the Illuminati'.

Another very popular theory is that the Fabian Society – like the Freemasons – has several secret levels of initiation with 'an inner Fabian elite'. According to this theory, most people involved in the society actually "have no idea of its true agenda" and are just "a front for the fraud at the heart of the organisation" – sorry, members.

Topping them all is the claim that the Fabian Society works in close contact with the Windsor family, who, together, are "trying to take control of world government". If this is true, I do hope the Queen caught our debate at this year's summer conference on whether the monarchy should be abolished.

While it is easy to make light of all these conspiracy theories, there is a more serious side worth considering. For claims to stick, they must be plausible; there needs to be proof that the dots being connected *do* actually connect. So theorists research intently to find 'reliable' evidence. They quote from history books on Fabianism, or from the diaries and biographies of the society's founders. And worryingly, by doing so, their claims often appear convincing.

The theorists extrapolate from information found on the society's own website: that we once had 200 members sitting in the House of Commons, is turned into evidence that we "write Labour's policy statements, manifestos and party programmes", for instance. Facts can be manipulated to suit warped versions of the truth.

But most dangerous of all is that these conspiracy theories are going unchallenged, and, if anything, are reinforced by a community of people who also think the same. For a long-time we've just ignored them, so maybe calling them out in this article was overdue. Then again, if you don't hear from me after this, do some digging. **F**

## A forgotten parent

The idealistic movement from which the Fabian Society first split should be remembered for its own sake, says

*Paul Richards*



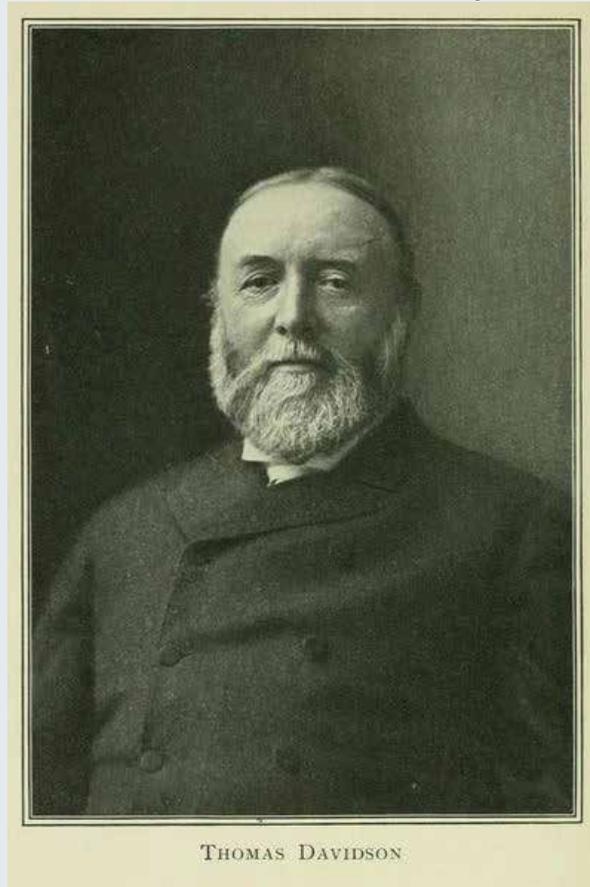
*Paul Richards is a former chair of the Fabian Society and author of several Fabian reports*

The Fellowship of the New Life has been relegated to a footnote in the history of British socialism. It was founded in London in 1883 and disbanded in 1898, one of many radical groupings in this period of 'socialist revival'. It was dedicated to 'the cultivation of a perfect character in each and all' and 'the subordination of material things to spiritual things'. Almost as soon as it was born, it split, with a new faction dedicated to less airy-fairy and more socialist, practical political pursuits. George Bernard Shaw said one faction went off to 'sit among the dandelions and the other to organise the docks.' In January 1884 the latter renamed themselves the Fabian Society.

David Marquand wrote that 'it is as the parent of the Fabian Society that the Fellowship has achieved its modest place in most histories of British socialism.' This is partly because the Fellowship was almost immediately outpaced by its illustrious progeny, and partly because it was so short-lived, dwindling with the dying of the century. This is a shame, because the Fellowship, its leading lights, and the ideas it espoused, tell a hidden, but important story.

The Fellowship was started by the so-called 'wandering scholar' Thomas Davidson. He appears as a peripatetic philosopher, prodigious writer and lecturer, and a charismatic figure, capable of attracting cult-like adoration, as well as outright enmity. He believed in the perfectibility of the human soul, as the precursor to perfecting society. He was firmly of the view, unlike the Fabians, that it should occur in this order. His disciple Percival Chubb set about organising talks and seminars, attracting young, radical minds to form the Fellowship.

The leaders were in their twenties but were pioneers in their fields. Havelock Ellis



THOMAS DAVIDSON

pioneered the study of sex; Edward Carpenter is the godfather of LGBT rights, inspiring EM Forster to write *Maurice*, and DH Lawrence to write *Lady Chatterley's Lover*; Edith Lees and Olive Schreiner were 'New Women' writers.

### The Fellowship, its leading lights, and the ideas it espoused, tell a hidden, but important story

Henry Salt invented modern vegetarianism and converted Mahatma Gandhi to a meat-free diet. Ramsay MacDonald became the first Labour prime minister. The 'new life' they imagined was egalitarian, classless, with liberated gender roles and sexual behaviour. It was not averse to nudism, recreational drugs and comfy shoes. Edward Carpenter made and sold sandals at his gay commune in Milnthorpe, and liberals have been wearing them ever since.

It would be neat if the split between Fellowship and Fabians symbolised the fork in the road between practical socialism and ethical socialism, between principled actors and pragmatists. History, however, is rarely so simple. The first Fabians and the New Lifers

remained on good terms, attending each other's meetings, lectures and summer schools. The early Fabians were social reformers, standing for office, organising strikes and building organisations, as well as pamphleteers and summer school attendees. The New Lifers were no less engaged in real world attempts to change society.

They formed a socialist commune, Fellowship House, at 29 Doughty Street, in Bloomsbury, London. The first residents included Ramsay MacDonald and Edith Lees who later wrote a comic novel about the experience. The experiment was a disaster, attracting oddballs and misfits, and descending into arguments about the washing up. In Lees' fictional account, a new recruit arrives at the commune, with a radical suggestion: changing the name from the Brotherhood of the Perfect Life to the Naked Brotherhood of the Perfect Life and taking off all their clothes. Lees later wrote that unlike William Morris's famous dictum that 'fellowship is heaven, lack of fellowship is hell', at Doughty Street, fellowship was hell.

More successful was the 'new school' they established at Abbotsholme in Derbyshire. It was founded in 1889 by Edward Carpenter and Cecil Reddie.

Its early pupils were taught horticulture, animal husbandry, modern languages, world religions and were the first to receive sex education. The influence of these 'progressive' methods is felt today.

Henry Hyndman, the self-styled Marxist, called them "a depository of old cranks, humanitarians, vegetarians, anti-vivisectionists and anti-vaccinationists, arty-crafties and all the rest of them." The feminist historian Sheila Rowbotham says "they have been dismissed easily as cranks and visionaries, old photographs to be shuffled away. But this is to dismiss what was vital and living in the socialist tradition to which they belonged." Their ideas, especially environmentalism, animal rights, LGTB rights and women's liberation, prefigured the best of socialism in the twentieth century, and avoided the worst.

They believed that for society to be decent and kind, humans needed to be decent and kind, and devised practical ways to achieve this. That is a noble enough aim. They observed society at the end of that century, with its fabulous wealth and abject poverty, its manifold injustices, its glittering technological advances and its degraded masses, and decided they could do much better. Surely for that alone the members of the Fellowship deserve more than a footnote? ■

# Listings

## BIRMINGHAM & WEST MIDLANDS

Details and information from Luke John Davies at [bhamfabians@gmail.com](mailto:bhamfabians@gmail.com)

## BOURNEMOUTH & DISTRICT

26 October. Kate Green MP  
30 November Annual Any Questions evening  
25 January 2019. Stephen Morgan MP  
22 February. Tan Deshai MP  
All meetings are at 7.30 in the Friends Meeting House Bournemouth BH5 1AH. Contact Ian Taylor on 01202 396634 or [taylorbournemouth@gmail.com](mailto:taylorbournemouth@gmail.com) for details

## BRIGHTON & HOVE

28 September. Trevor Phillips on 'Racism' 26 October. Mike Parker on 'Rethinking Poverty'  
23 November. Prof. Alan Winters on 'Brexit'.  
All meetings at 8.00 at Friends Meeting House, Ship St, BN1 1AF  
Contact secretary Ralph Bayley at [ralphbayley@gmail.com](mailto:ralphbayley@gmail.com)

## CENTRAL LONDON

Re-forming with a new cycle of meetings on the 3rd Wednesday of the month 17 October, 7.30 Planning meeting 21 November, 7.30  
Meetings at the Fabian Society, 61 Petty France SW1H 9EU  
Details and enquiries to Michael Weatherburn – [michael.weatherburn@gmail.com](mailto:michael.weatherburn@gmail.com)

## CHISWICK & WEST LONDON

26 September. AGM and speaker Sara Ibrahim  
8.00 at Chiswick Town Hall, Heathfield Terrace, Chiswick  
Details from Alison Baker at [a.m.baker@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:a.m.baker@blueyonder.co.uk)

## COLCHESTER

Regular meetings in the Hexagonal Room, Quaker Meeting House, 6, Church St, Colchester.  
Details from Maurice Austin at [maurice.austin@phonecoop.coop](mailto:maurice.austin@phonecoop.coop) for details

## COUNTY DURHAM

15 September. John Ashby, (descendent of Charles Booth) on 'What Would Charles Booth make of the Social Morphology of County Durham?' 17 November, Professor Joyce Liddle on 'Brexit and Local Government leadership'  
All meetings, 12.15–2.00 at Lionmouth Rural Centre near Esh Winning DH7 9QE. £4 including lunch  
Details from Prof Alan Townsend 01388 746479

## CROYDON & SUTTON

13 September, 8.00, Dr Jason Brock on 'The Changing Work Centre' 50 Waverley Avenue, Sutton SM1 3JY

Future speaker, Seb Dance MEP  
RSVP and information from Emily Brothers – [info@emilybrothers.com](mailto:info@emilybrothers.com)

## DARTFORD & GRAVESHAM

11 September. Margaret Hodge MP  
Details of this and all meetings contact Deborah Stoate at [deborah.stoate@fabians.org.uk](mailto:deborah.stoate@fabians.org.uk)

## EAST LOTHIAN

Details of meetings from Mark Davidson at [m.d.davidson@me.com](mailto:m.d.davidson@me.com)

## FINCHLEY

Special meeting in memory of our Chairman, Brian Watkins 27 September, 7.00. Lord Peter Hennessy on 'Britain's Place in the World'  
The Blue Beetle, Hendon Lane, N3 1TR  
Contact Mike Walsh on [mike.walsh44@ntlworld.com](mailto:mike.walsh44@ntlworld.com) for details

## GRIMSBY

Regular meetings.  
Contact Pat Holland at [hollandpat@hotmail.com](mailto:hollandpat@hotmail.com)

## HAVERING

20 September. Tom Copley of the GLA on 'Housing and the London Plan' 7.30, Trinity Church, Station Rd, Upminster  
17 October. Grace Blakeley on 'Labour Party Economic Policy'. 7.30 at the Gallery Studio, Fairkytes Arts Centre, 51 Billet lane, Hornchurch  
25 January. AGM and speaker Lord Roy Kennedy.  
Venue as above at 7.30  
Contact David Marshall for details at [haveringfabians@outlook.com](mailto:haveringfabians@outlook.com)

## ISLINGTON

Regular meetings. Contact Adeline Au at [siewyin.au@gmail.com](mailto:siewyin.au@gmail.com)

## LEEDS

For details contact Luke Hurst at [luke.will.h@gmail.com](mailto:luke.will.h@gmail.com)

## NORTH EAST LONDON.

Details of speakers and venues, contact Nathan Ashley at [NELondonFabians@outlook.com](mailto:NELondonFabians@outlook.com)

## NEWHAM

For details of regular meetings, please contact Rohit Dasgupta at [rhit\\_svu@hotmail.com](mailto:rhit_svu@hotmail.com)

## NORTHUMBRIA AREA

6 October  
For details of this and all meetings, please contact Pat Hobson at [pathobson@hotmail.com](mailto:pathobson@hotmail.com)

## OXFORD

Regular meetings and events.  
Contact David Addison at [admin@oxfordfabians.org.uk](mailto:admin@oxfordfabians.org.uk)

## PETERBOROUGH

14 September. Charles Clarke (former Home Secretary) on 'A Criminal Justice System that works'  
19 October. Barb Jacobson on 'Basic Income'  
Saturday 3 November. Theatre visit at 2.30  
30 November. George Weyman on 'The Cambridge Commons'.  
11 January. Alex Mayer MEP on 'Brexit Progress'  
All meetings at the Dragonfly Hotel, Thorpe Meadows PE3 6GA at 8.00  
Details from Brian Keegan at [brian@briankeegan.demon.co.uk](mailto:brian@briankeegan.demon.co.uk)

## PORTSMOUTH

Details of meetings from Nita Cary at [dewicary@yahoo.com](mailto:dewicary@yahoo.com)

## READING & DISTRICT

Details from Tony Skuse at [tony@skuse.net](mailto:tony@skuse.net)

## SOUTHAMPTON AREA

Day conference on Saturday 27 October. Speakers to include Anneliese Dodds MP and Lord Peter Hain  
Regular meetings. Details from Eliot Horn at [eliot.horn@btinternet.com](mailto:eliot.horn@btinternet.com)

## TONBRIDGE & TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Regular meetings.  
Contact Martin Clay at [martin.clay@btinternet.com](mailto:martin.clay@btinternet.com)

## YORK & DISTRICT

Details from Cynthia Collier at [mike.collier@talktalk.net](mailto:mike.collier@talktalk.net)

### DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

#### Southampton regional conference

Saturday 27 October, 9.45–4.00

Concourse Suite and Avenue Hall, St Andrews United Reform Church, Southampton SO17 1XQ

'Take Back Control', with speakers including Stephen Timms MP, Anneliese Dodds MP and Lord Maurice Glasman Tickets £25 on Eventbrite

## FABIAN QUIZ

### A POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE WORLD

Jonathan Holslag



In three thousand years of history, China has spent at least 11 centuries at war. The Roman Empire was in conflict

during at least 50 per cent of its lifetime. Since 1776, the United States has spent over one hundred years at war. The dream of peace has been universal in the history of humanity. So why have we so rarely been able to achieve it?

This book produces a sweeping history of the world, from the Iron Age to the present, that investigates the causes of conflict between empires, nations and peoples and the attempts at diplomacy and cosmopolitanism. A birds-eye view of three thousand years of history, this book illuminates the forces shaping world politics from Ancient Egypt to the Han Dynasty, the Pax Romana to the rise of Islam, the Peace of Westphalia to the creation of the United Nations.

This truly global approach enables Holslag to search for patterns across different eras and regions, and explore larger questions about war, diplomacy, and power. Has trade fostered peace? What are the limits of diplomacy? How does environmental change affect stability? Is war a universal sin of power? At a time when the threat of nuclear war looms again, this is a much-needed history intended for students of international politics, and anyone looking for a background on current events.

**Penguin has kindly given us five copies to give away. To win one, answer the following question:**

*When and where was the first military battle in history in which a detailed account has survived?*

Please email your answer and your address to [review@fabian-society.org.uk](mailto:review@fabian-society.org.uk)

Or send a postcard to Fabian Society, Fabian Quiz, 61 Petty France, London, SW1H 9EU

**ANSWERS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN 22 OCTOBER 2018.**



# ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT 2018

## Treasurer's report, David Chaplin

The society ended its financial year with a strong performance but with clear areas for future vigilance. At the beginning of the year, our staff team thoroughly planned for a number of scenarios which would be likely to carry negative financial implications for the society. This was principally focused on the uncertainty in the external political environment that has been a continuous challenge for the Society and the executive committee over the past three years.

Despite this challenge, the society has recorded a modest increase in overall income, as shown in the figures published in this report. Our total income from membership increased by over 10 per cent as a direct result of the decisions taken by the society to increase our subscription rates. In retrospect, this decision helped us to weather some of the financial uncertainties that the past year has presented, and I am incredibly grateful to all our members for their ongoing generosity towards the society and our goals.

We saw a range of challenges in meeting the Partnership and Events budget this year, with a 30 per cent drop in income year on year. Our editorial team also saw income go down by 40 per cent when compared to last year, however this was due to strong overperformance in the previous financial year. Finally, our research team continued to increase its income with a 15 per cent growth compared to 2016/17.

Over the past year we have seen a number of important operational changes at the society, including the implementation of a new database to help us manage our communications with members; the launch of a new website; and the implementation of the new GDPR requirements.

In addition, we have seen a number of staff changes at the society which have required the staff and executive to collaborate to ensure we continue to deliver for our members.

For the forthcoming financial year, the executive committee remains tightly focused on making cautious and prudent financial decisions and focusing on building a lasting financial reserve for the society's future. Our current levels of reserves remain low, and this is a matter of concern to the executive committee and to me, as treasurer. We will continue to scrutinise and monitor this through the society's finance & general purposes sub-committee.

As always, I'd like to record the executive committee's gratitude to all the staff who work at the Fabian Society. Now more than ever, our society is a place where politics and ideas can

be debated in a welcoming, informed, and safe environment. Long may this continue.

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## Financial statements

The accounts presented in this report are an extract from the financial statements and may not contain sufficient information to allow a full understanding of the financial affairs of the society. For further information the full financial statements and auditor's report should be consulted. Copies of these can be obtained from the Fabian Society, 61 Petty France, London SW1H 9EU.

The Fabian Society's financial year runs from July 1st 2017 to June 30th 2018 and the financial information in this report covers that period. This report is sent to all members in the September mailing and presented to the AGM which takes place on Saturday 17 November 2018.

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## Auditors statement

### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Fabian Society (the 'society') for the year ended 30 June 2018 which comprise the income and expenditure account and balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the society's affairs as at 30 June 2018 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the society in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the

UK, including the FRC's ethical standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the executive committees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the executive committees' have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the society's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

### Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the executive committees' report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The executive committee are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the society and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the executive committees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the executive committees' report is inconsistent in any material aspect with the financial statements; or
- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit;

### Responsibilities of executive committee

As explained more fully in the executive committees' responsibilities statement, the executive committee are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the executive committee determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the executive committee are responsible for assessing the society's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the executive committee either intend to liquidate the society or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

### Use of the audit report

This report is made solely to the Society's members. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Society's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the society and the society's members as a body, for our

<b>Income &amp; expenditure account</b> <i>for the year ended 30th June 2018</i>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
Individual members	261,766	232,276
Institutional affiliations and subscriptions	6,220	5,325
Donations and legacies	40,451	12,934
Publications sales	1,965	2,472
Conference and events	109,037	154,786
Publication sponsorship and advertisements	47,610	93,569
Research projects	267,000	232,565
Rents	21,303	17,913
Bank Interest, royalties and miscellaneous	633	568
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£755,985</b>	<b>£752,408</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Research projects	44,596	59,155
Staff costs	421,487	420,346
Printing and distribution	81,675	94,456
Conference and events	62,672	54,817
Promotion	7,255	5,627
Affiliation fees	6,158	5,086
Postage, phone and fax	8,752	10,758
Depreciation	21,540	17,881
Travel	332	1,470
Other	6,145	6,910
Stationery and copying	7,614	9,179
Legal and professional	9,263	4,946
Irrecoverable VAT	-	1,223
Premises costs	3,804	52,038
Bad debts	-	-
Information systems	13,909	7,190
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£754,260</b>	<b>£752,964</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) Before tax and transfers</b>	<b>1,725</b>	<b>(556)</b>
Transfers from reserves	-	-
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) before taxation</b>	<b>1,725</b>	<b>(556)</b>
Corporation Tax	-	-
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the year</b>	<b>£1,725</b>	<b>£(556)</b>
<b>Balance sheet</b>		
<b>as at 30th June 2018</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>	1,265,020	1,226,090
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Stock	5,798	6,448
Debtors and prepayments	175,824	160,234
Bank and cash	-	-
	<b>181,622</b>	<b>166,682</b>
<b>CREDITORS-AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR</b>		
Creditors and accruals	(166,129)	(113,984)
<b>Net current assets</b>	15,493	-
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>1,280,513</b>	<b>1,278,788</b>
General fund	1,274,238	1,272,513
Restricted fund	6,275	6,275
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>£1,280,513</b>	<b>£1,278,788</b>

audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Knox Cropper  
Chartered Accountants  
8/9 Well Court London,  
EC4M 9DN  
25th July 2018

These financial standards have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Section 1A "Small Entities" of Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

#### Financial partners and supporters

Age UK, City of London, City UK, University and College Union, Community, CWU, Dartmouth Street Trust, Disability Labour, FBU, FEPS, FES-London, Giles Wright, GMB, Hanover, ICAEW, Independent Age, John Mills, Lankelly Chase, Lloyds Banking group, Manufacturing Technology Association, NSC Trust, Power to Change, Sanofi, Scope, Trust for London, TSSA, TUC, Unison, Usdaw, Vodafone and Woodland Trust.

## Noticeboard

### Fabian Society Northern Conference and AGM

Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2018

12 noon to 5pm

Venue: The People's History Museum, Left Bank, Spinningfields, MANCHESTER M3 3ER

Join us in Manchester for a special Northern Conference with senior political speakers – followed by our Annual General Meeting.

Free admission to the People's History Museum

Formal AGM Business

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2017 AGM
3. Matters arising
4. In memoriam
5. Chair's report
6. Treasurer's report
7. General secretary's report
8. Approval of annual report 2017/18
9. Appointment of auditors
10. Jenny Jeger Prize
11. Date of next AGM
12. Any Other business

TheCityUK

# THECITYUK FRINGE EVENT

Global talent: immigration and skills after Brexit

17:00 - 18:30, Monday 24 September

Merseyside Maritime Museum, Albert Dock, Liverpool L3 4AQ (outside secure zone)

Confirmed speakers include:

- Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP, Chair, Home Affairs Select Committee
- Wes Streeting MP, Member, Treasury Select Committee
- Miles Celic, Chief Executive Officer, TheCityUK
- Margaret Burton, Partner, Global Immigration, People Advisory Services, EY

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# TIME FOR BETTER PAY

**£10 PER HOUR**

**MINIMUM 16 HOUR CONTRACTS**

**RIGHT TO 'NORMAL HOURS' CONTRACT**

**NO TO ZERO HOURS MISUSE**

## MINIMUM PAY

Minimum pay of £10 per hour from the age of 18.

## MINIMUM HOURS

A statutory minimum contract of 16 hours per week for those who want it.

## CONTRACTS

A right to an employment contract that reflects the normal hours of work.

## ZERO HOURS

An end to the misuse of zero hour contracts.

Visit our website for some great campaign ideas and resources.

**[WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/CAMPAIGNS](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/CAMPAIGNS)**

To join Usdaw visit: **[WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/JOIN](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/JOIN)**

or call **0800 030 80 30**

*U***s***d***a***w*  
*Union of Shop, Distributive  
and Allied Workers*



■ General Secretary: Paddy Lillis

■ President: Amy Murphy

■ Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ