



UK Disabled People's Reclaiming Our Futures Alliance

Manifesto Comparisons: what the parties are saying about Deaf and disability issues

Political party election manifestos differ in size, in format and in the issues they focus on depending on how a party wants to promote itself and to fit with its election campaign.

To make it easier to directly compare the GE2017 manifestos and what they have to say on Deaf and disability specific issues, we have pulled out relevant pledges and collated them under a number of themes below.

At the end of this document you will also find links to the main party political manifestos and to the accessible formats that different parties have made available.

We urge all London Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations to encourage your members to engage in the 2017 General Election and make sure they have or know how to get information to help them decide how to use their vote.

Accessible places and transport

Conservative party

"we will review disabled people's access and amend regulations if necessary to improve disabled access to licensed premises, parking and housing. We will work with providers of everyday essential services, like energy and telecoms, to reduce the extra costs that disability can incur."

Green party

"All public transport should be fully accessible and step-free with a phase-in of free local public transport for young people, students, people with disabilities, and older people."

Labour party

“To make sure that autistic people are able to access the whole of their community and to put an end to social isolation, Labour will set the ambition to make our country autism-friendly.”

“On our railways...In public ownership, we will deliver real improvements for passengers... introducing legal duties to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.”

“We will reform the legislation governing taxi and private hire services, introducing national standards to guarantee safety and accessibility.”

“Sporting events must be open and accessible to all. We will push sports authorities to make rapid improvements on access provision for fans with disabilities.”

Liberal Democrat party

“Increase accessibility to public places and transport by making more stations wheelchair accessible, improving the legislative framework governing Blue Badges, setting up a benchmarking standard for accessible cities, and bringing into effect the provisions of the 2010 Equality Act on discrimination by private hire vehicles and taxis.”

British Sign Language

Green party

“The Green Party is committed to supporting the BSL (England & Wales) Act to make BSL an officially recognised language.”

Labour party

“Labour will give British Sign Language full recognition as a recognised language.”

Disability benefits/social security

Green party

“Redress benefits injustice with a social security system that gives everyone confidence they will get support when they need it, including disabled people.”

Labour party

“Scrap the punitive sanctions regime.”

“The Tories have completely failed on their promise of making work pay and on tackling the barriers to work faced by people with disabilities.”

“Labour will repeal the following cuts in social security support to people with disabilities through a new Social Security Bill published in our first year in office.

We will:

- increase Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) by £30 per week for those in the work-related activity group, and repeal cuts in the UC limited capacity for work element;
- increase Carer’s Allowance by £11 to the level of Jobseekers’ Allowance;
- implement the court decision on Personal Independence Payment (PIP) so that there is real parity of esteem between those with physical and mental-health conditions;
- scrap the Work Capability and Personal Independence Payment assessments and replace them with a personalised, holistic assessment process that provides each individual with a tailored plan, building on their strengths and addressing barriers.
- Labour will end the privatisation of assessments;
- end the pointless stress of reassessments for people with severe long-term conditions.”

“We will change the culture of the social security system, from one that demonises people not in work to one that is supportive and enabling. As well as scrapping the Conservatives’ punitive sanctions regime, we will change how Jobcentre Plus staff are performance-managed.”

Employment

Conservative party

“We will get 1 million more people with disabilities into employment over the next ten years. We will harness the opportunities of flexible working and the digital economy to generate jobs for those whose disabilities make traditional work difficult.”

“We will transform how mental health is regarded in the workplace. We will amend health and safety regulations so that employers provide appropriate first aid training and needs assessment for mental health, as they currently do for risks to physical health, and extend Equalities Act protections against discrimination to mental health conditions that are episodic and fluctuating. We will consider the findings of the Stevenson-Farmer Review into workplace mental health support, working with employers to encourage new products and incentives to improve the mental health and wellbeing support available to their employees. And, as we did with Dementia Friends, we will train one million members of the public in basic mental health awareness and first aid to break the stigma of mental illness.”

Labour party

“Commission a report into expanding the Access to Work programme.”

“Autism covers a wide range of conditions that reflect neurological differences among people. We will work with employers, trade unions and public services to improve awareness of neurodiversity in the workplace and in society.”

“We will change the culture of the social security system, from one that demonises people not in work to one that is supportive and enabling.”

Conservative party:

“We will fix the dysfunctional housing market so that housing is more affordable and people have the security they need to plan for the future. The key to this is to build enough homes to meet demand. That will slow the rise in housing costs so more ordinary, working families can afford to buy a home and bring the cost of renting down... We will meet our 2015 commitment to deliver a million homes by the end of 2020 and we will deliver half a million more by the end of 2022... We will enter into new Council Housing Deals with ambitious, pro-development, local authorities to help them build more social housing.”

Green party:

“Abolish the cruel and unfair bedroom tax.” “Significantly improve housing choice for D/deaf, disabled and older people by requiring all councils to appropriately plan for their housing needs and significantly increase the numbers of homes built to lifetime home and mobility standards over the next 5 years.”

Labour party:

“We will remove government restrictions that stop councils building homes and begin the biggest council building programme for at least 30 years. We will ditch the Conservatives’ ban on long-term council tenancies to give council tenants security in their homes. We want more people to have a secure tenancy in a home built to high standards. Labour will scrap the punitive bedroom tax, which has caused many people to be evicted from their home and their community.”

Liberal Democrat party

“Reach a housebuilding target of 300,000 homes a year by 2022, including direct building by government.”

Mental Health

Conservative party

“It was Conservatives in government that gave parity of esteem to the treatment of mental health in the National Health Service. We have backed this with a significant increase in funding: since 2010 we have increased spending on mental health each year to a record £11.4 billion in 2016/17, with a further investment of £1 billion by 20/21, so that we can deliver the mental health services people deserve. We will now build on this commitment. First, we will address the need for better treatments across the whole spectrum of mental health conditions. We will make the UK the leading research and technology economy in the world for mental health, bringing together public, private and charitable investment. Improving treatment services will not be sufficient, however. We will also reform outdated laws to ensure that those with mental illness are treated fairly and employers fulfil their responsibilities effectively. The current Mental Health Act does not operate as it should: if you

are put on a community treatment order it is very difficult to be discharged; sectioning is too often used to detain rather than treat; families' information about their loved ones is severely curtailed – parents can be the last to learn that their son or daughter has been sectioned. So we will introduce the first new Mental Health Bill for thirty-five years, putting parity of esteem at the heart of treatment.”

Green party

“Bring mental health care in line with physical health care and ensure people experiencing mental health crises are supported close to their home and support networks. Introduce mental health awareness training within the public sector and encourage a more open dialogue on the issue in wider society.”

Labour party

“In order to protect services, we will ring-fence mental health budgets and ensure funding reaches the frontline. We will end the scandal of children being treated on adult mental health wards and stop people being sent across the country, away from their support networks, to secure the treatment they need by bringing forward the ending of out-of-area placements to 2019. Labour will also bring an end to the neglect of children's mental health. Half of people with mental health problems as adults present with symptoms by the age of 14. Yet, across England only 8 per cent of mental health funding goes to services for children and young people. In recent years, referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services have increased by two-thirds, and the number of young people presenting to A&E units with psychiatric conditions has doubled. Suicide is now the most common cause of death for boys aged between five and 19. Labour will invest in early intervention by increasing the proportion of mental health budgets spent on support for children and young people. We will ensure that access to a counselling service is available for all children in secondary schools. Giving mental health the same priority as physical health means not only ensuring access to services, but also making improvements, to those services. Choice is important in a modern NHS, and patients who receive their therapy of choice have better outcomes. Labour will therefore ask the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) to evaluate the potential for increasing the range of evidence based psychological therapies on offer.”

Liberal Democrat party:

“Make waiting times for mental health care match those for physical health care.”

Rights

Conservative party

“We will build on the proud Conservative record in supporting those with disabilities, including the landmark Disability Discrimination Act of 1995. We want to see attitudes to disability shift as they have for race, gender and sexuality in recent years: it should be completely unacceptable for people with disabilities to be treated negatively.”

Green party

“Defend the Human Rights Act and UK membership of the European Convention on Human Rights, and reinstate funding for the Equality and Human Rights Commission.” “Action to tackle racism and discrimination on the basis of faith or disability, real equality for LGBTIQ+ people, equal rights for mixed gender couples to have a Civil Partnership.”

Labour party

“Labour supports a social model of disability. People may have a condition or an impairment but they are disabled by society. We need to remove the barriers in society that restrict opportunities and choices for people with disabilities. We will build on the previous Labour government’s commitment to people with disabilities in 2009 as signatories to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and incorporate it into UK law.”

“Labour will strengthen access to justice for people with disabilities by enhancing the 2010 Equality Act, enabling discrimination at work to be challenged. We will ensure that under the Istanbul Convention, disability hate crime and violence against women with disabilities is reported annually, with national actions plans to address these issues.”

“Labour will retain the Human Rights Act.”

“We will reintroduce funding for the preparation of judicial review cases. Judicial review is an important way of holding government to account. There

are sufficient safeguards to discourage unmeritorious cases. We will review the legal aid means tests, including the capital test for those on income-related benefits. Labour will consider the reinstatement of other legal aid entitlements after receiving the final recommendations of the Access to Justice Commission led by Lord Bach.”

“We will extend the Freedom of Information Act to private companies that run public services.”

“A Labour government will enhance the powers and functions of [the Equality and Human Rights] commission, making it truly independent, to ensure it can support ordinary working people to effectively challenge any discrimination they may face. A Labour government will reinstate the public sector equality duties and seek to extend them to the private sector, ensuring all citizens benefit from this Labour legislation.”

“Labour will legislate to make terminal illness a protected characteristic under the Equality Act.”

Liberal Democrat party

“Defend human rights by opposing any attempt to leave the European Convention of Human Rights.”

Social care

Conservative party

“our forthcoming green paper will also address system-wide issues to improve the quality of care and reduce variation in practice. This will ensure the care system works better with the NHS to reduce unnecessary and unhealthy hospital stays and delayed transfers of care, and provide better quality assurance within the care sector. We will reduce loneliness and promote technological solutions to prolong independent living, and invest in dementia research. As the majority of care is informally provided, mainly by families, we will give workers a new statutory entitlement to carer’s leave, as enjoyed in other countries.”

[To note the Conservative manifesto also made a commitment to changing how much people have to pay for social care but since it came out the leader of the Conservatives Theresa May has done a u-turn. The manifesto says: “the value of the family home will be taken into account along with other

assets and income, whether care is provided at home, or in a residential or nursing care home. Second, to ensure this is fair, we will introduce a single capital floor, set at £100,000, more than four times the current means test threshold. This will ensure that, no matter how large the cost of care turns out to be, people will always retain at least £100,000 of their savings and assets, including value in the family home. Third, we will extend the current freedom to defer payments for residential care to those receiving care at home, so no-one will have to sell their home in their lifetime to pay for care.” Their position now seems to be that the amount will not be £100,000 but will be set after the election.]

Green party

“Major investment in social care for the elderly and all those who need it.”

“Increase funding for local authorities so they can provide good quality public services and invest in our communities, creating thousands of jobs. A single budget covering health and social services, to make life easier for people who need to access several types of service.”

“We will review the effectiveness of how public services are structured, sensitive to the needs of all people, including assessment of how care is provided at the transition age of 18.”

Labour party

“In our first term, Labour will lay the foundations of a National Care Service for England. Our first urgent task will be to address the immediate funding crisis. We will increase the social care budgets by a further £8 billion over the lifetime of the next Parliament, including an additional £1 billion for the first year. This will be enough for providers to pay a real living wage without cutting the quality of care they provide. It will allow implementation of the principles of the Ethical Care Charter, already adopted in 28 council areas, ending 15-minute care visits and providing care workers with paid travel time, access to training and an option to choose regular hours. Labour will also increase the Carer’s Allowance for unpaid full-time carers to align the benefit with rates of the Jobseeker’s Allowance... Improving the quality of social care is a vital part of providing dignity in older age and independence and support for people who are vulnerable or have a disability or a mental health condition. Labour will build a new National Care Service. We will also set out the funding alternatives clearly and honestly, seeking to implement change through consensus.”

Liberal Democrats

“Save the NHS by putting a penny in the pound on income tax to give the NHS and social care services the cash they need.”

“Our longer-term objective will be to bring together NHS and social care into one seamless service – pooling budgets in every area by 2020 and developing integrated care organisations.”

Links to GE2017 political party manifestos

Conservative party: <https://www.conservatives.com/manifesto>

Green party: <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/green-guarantee/all-manifestos-alternative-formats.html>

Labour party: <http://www.labour.org.uk/index.php/manifesto2017>

Liberal Democrat party: <http://www.libdems.org.uk/manifesto>

Manifesto accessible formats

Conservative party

Accessible Manifesto versions:

<https://www.conservatives.com/accessiblemanifestoversions>

- Electronic braille format: [Volume 1](#) and [Volume 2](#)
- [Audio manifesto](#)
- [Large font format manifesto](#)
- [Easy read manifesto](#)
- British [Sign Language manifesto](#)

Green party

The Green Party have produced a specific Disability manifesto in a range of accessible formats: <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/green-guarantee/all-manifestos-alternative-formats.html>

Audio: <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/assets/files/gp2017/Green%20Party%20pledges.mp3>

British Sign Language: the Green party has produced BSL videos for each section of its manifesto

- [Economy – BSL video version](#)
- [Environment – BSL video version](#)
- [EU Membership – BSL video version](#)
- [NHS – BSL video version](#)
- [Education – BSL video version](#)
- [Young People – BSL video version](#)
- [Affordable Housing – BSL video version](#)
- [World Safety – BSL video version](#)
- [Citizenship – BSL video version](#)
- [Transport – BSL video version](#)

Easy read: <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/assets/images/greenguarantee/gg-easyread-summary.pdf>

Labour party

Manifesto in a range of Accessible formats: <http://www.labour.org.uk/index.php/manifesto2017/accessible-manifesto>

Audio: <http://www.labour.org.uk/index.php/manifesto2017/accessible-manifesto#manifesto-Summary>

Easy read: <http://www.labour.org.uk/page/-/Images/manifesto-2017/LabourManifestoEASYREAD.pdf>

Braille: <http://www.labour.org.uk/page/-/Images/manifesto-2017/RP020662.brf>

BSL Manifesto

Summary: <http://www.labour.org.uk/index.php/manifesto2017/accessible-manifesto>

Key manifesto pledges in Sign Supported

English: <http://www.labour.org.uk/index.php/manifesto2017/accessible-manifesto>

The Labour Party has also produced a Manifesto for Disabled People (PDF): <http://www.labour.org.uk/page/-/manifesto-for-disabled-people.PDF>

Liberal Democrats

Audio part 1:

http://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/themes/5909d4366ad575794c000000/attachments/original/1495189781/Lib_Dem_Manifesto_2017_Part_1.zip?1495189781

Audio part 2:

http://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/themes/5909d4366ad575794c000000/attachments/original/1495189820/Lib_Dem_Manifesto_2017_Part_2.zip?1495189820

British Sign Language: <http://www.libdems.org.uk/bsl>

Easy read:

http://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/themes/5909d4366ad575794c000000/attachments/original/1495011810/easy_read_manifesto.pdf?1495011810