



A Social Justice Manifesto
for the next Mayor of London

THE CENTRE FOR
SOCIAL
JUSTICE



A SOCIAL JUSTICE MANIFESTO FOR THE NEXT MAYOR OF LONDON

INTRODUCTION BY PHILIPPA STROUD:

On May 5th London will elect a new Mayor. London is one of the world's greatest cities, but poverty still holds back too many lives in our capital. London is a great success story with much to be proud of, however the next Mayor will need to address particular problems around youth unemployment, low pay and renting in the private sector:

- London has the **second highest** rate of youth unemployment of any UK region. **1 in 6 young Londoners aged 16 - 24 are unemployed.**¹
- **Four out of five low-paid London workers will not have fully escaped low pay after ten years.**² We need low paid work to be a gateway to improving skills and higher pay.
- Across London private renting is becoming the new norm for low-income Londoners. **One in three housing benefit claimants in London lives in privately rented accommodation.**³ We need a new approach to supporting low income Londoners, renting from private landlords.

The Centre for Social Justice is calling on all candidates to commit to tackling the root causes of poverty in London if they are elected. To do this the next Mayor of London should appoint a high profile **Deputy Mayor for Social Justice** to oversee a poverty reduction strategy during the Mayor's four year term.

This Manifesto outlines a number of proposals to help tackle London's poverty problem, from giving disadvantaged children a second chance at a decent education to a bold new approach to housing low income Londoners.

In the first part of this Manifesto we set out policy ideas which an incoming Mayor could pursue within their existing powers. The second part looks at the sort of things a Mayor could do if there was a more extensive devolution settlement in place.

The next Mayor should put Social Justice at the heart of their plans for London and ensure that by the next election more Londoners are thriving. This would be a historic achievement for any London Mayor.

Baroness Stroud

Director, Centre for Social Justice

1. www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/business/support-promotion-and-advice/Documents/supporting-youth-employability-in-london.pdf

2. www.jrf.org.uk/report/london-without-poverty, p8

3. www.londonpovertyprofile.org.uk/indicators/topics/receiving-non-work-benefits/housing-benefit-caseload

Social Justice Policies for a New Mayor

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Although London has unparalleled job opportunities, some parts of the capital are being left behind.

As a whole the city's unemployment rate remains noticeably higher than the national average at 6.3 per cent against 5.1 per cent.⁴ Similarly youth unemployment sits at about 18% against a national average of 14%.⁵ These figures mask particular local problems – for instance, one in six working-age people in Barking & Dagenham is on benefits.⁶

POLICY 1: GUARENTEE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LONDON'S YOUNG PEOPLE

The Mayor could ensure that all contracts procured by agencies within his remit (i.e. Police, Housing, Fire, Transport) make provision for young people in London to be given work experience or apprenticeships, guaranteeing opportunities for young Londoners.



4, Greater London Authority, *Unemployed Rate, Region*, 17th February 2016, [accessed via: data.london.gov.uk/dataset/unemployment-rate-region (16/03/16)]

5, *Ibid*

6, *Trust for London, London's Poverty Profile 2015, London: New Policy Institute, October 2015, p80*

EDUCATION

Overall London's GCSE results now outstrip the rest of the country – a higher proportion of London pupils achieve 5 A* to C grades at GCSE including English and maths than in any other English region (in 2013/14, 70.5 per cent vs a national average of 65.8 per cent).⁷ Despite these achievements, pockets of failure remain.

Nearly half of all children in Lewisham, Newham and Islington fail to hit this benchmark and in Tower Hamlets one in eight adults has no qualifications at all.⁸ To improve standards for children in London the Mayor could increase mentoring across the capital.

POLICY 2: THE MAYORS INNOVATION FUND FOR MENTORING

A successful government programme supported by the DWP and Impetus PEF has been ThinkForward.⁹ Based in Tower Hamlets this programme identifies children most at risk of becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training) and offers them four years of mentoring to help them with school, choosing courses, getting work experience and planning a career. They have succeeded in reducing NEET levels by up to 90% amongst this hardest-to-help group.¹⁰ As this programme has been funded by a Social Impact Bond, it would be possible for the Mayor to invest in this and other, similar programmes to help prevent unemployment before it starts.

Over the past few years DWP and DfE have championed Innovation Funds to incubate creative ideas that help to overcome social problems. The DWP Fund in particular has set up a number of Social Impact Bonds to support payment-by-results programmes which have in turn received investment from Big Society Capital.

The Mayoralty could establish its own Innovation Fund (the London Fund for Mentoring) to invest in mentoring programmes for London's most disadvantaged young people.

POLICY 3: ENCOURAGE A NEW NETWORK OF LONDON STATE BOARDING SCHOOLS AND FUND PLACES FOR LONDON CHILDREN ON 'THE EDGE OF CARE'

Whilst the Mayor does not have a specific brief to improve education, the landscape of English schools is currently set for an enormous shake up with the Chancellor's announcement that local authorities will cease to run schools. All of London's schools will become Academies by 2022, giving the next Mayor an opportunity to shape London's education system for years to come.

The Mayor could use his convening powers to develop a new network of State Boarding Schools in London.

7, *National Statistics, GCSE and equivalent attainment by pupil characteristics*, 10 February 2015 [accessed via: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gcse-and-equivalent-attainment-by-pupil-characteristics-2014 (17/03/16)]

8, *Ibid*; *Official Labour Market Statistics, Labour Market Profile – Tower Hamlet, London: Nomis* [accessed via: www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157257/report.aspx (17/03/16)]

9, *ThinkForward, Our Impact* [accessed via: think-forward.org.uk/our-impact (17/03/16)]

10, *ThinkForward, Our Impact* [accessed via: think-forward.org.uk/our-impact (17/03/16)]

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As good as some schools are, given the limited scope of the school day and term they will not be enough to overcome the disadvantages some children face at home. There is strong evidence to suggest that boarding schools can act as a preventative intervention for disadvantaged children who may otherwise have gone into care.¹¹ However, the number of places is limited and furthermore, not enough children who would benefit are currently accessing those places which are available. The next Mayor should:

Commission a State Boarding Business Plan for London: Commission a review into the number of disadvantaged children that would benefit from attending a state boarding school, the number of additional places needed and an evaluation of the socio-economic profile of current intakes. Following this they should establish a plan for expanding the availability of places. The aim should be to have a funded place available for every London child that would benefit.

The Academisation of London Schools gives the next Mayor a chance to develop a Plan for new self-financing Boarding Houses to be provided alongside existing school provision. Having established their viability the Mayor should encourage the uptake of State Boarding and building on new Boarding Houses amongst London Academy chains.

The Mayor could consider using money from developer contributions towards this new network of State Boarding places and provide a Mayor's Bursary for children on the 'edge of care' to access new state boarding provision.

11, *The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), Closing the Divide: Tackling Educational Inequality in England, London: CSJ, September 2014*

FAMILY LIFE

Family breakdown remains a major issue within the capital. In parts of Camden, nearly two thirds of households with children are headed by a single parent.¹² This level of family instability makes life difficult for families and often for communities. The CSJ has championed ground breaking relationship support programmes from the US such as Parents as Partners and Family Foundations which have been shown to reduce family breakdown, arguing that they should be delivered in children's centres to help families stay together.

POLICY 4: FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIP SUPPORT

The Mayor could use the Mayor's Fund for London to pioneer family support in deprived areas to reduce family breakdown and help turn communities around.

12, *The Centre for Social Justice, Press Release, Lone parents tally heads for two million as numbers rise 20,000 a year, says CSJ report, 10 June 2013 [accessed via: www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/UserStorage/pdf/Press%20releases%202013/CSJ-Press-Release-Lone-Parents.pdf (21/03/16)]*



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

As is well known, London is suffering from a major problem in housing supply. In particular too many Londoners are still living in poorly built 1960s and 1970s estates. These often suffer from damp and mould, are low density, and are difficult to police.¹³

The next Mayor could bring councils and developers together to discuss how London's estates can be rejuvenated with minimum disruption to families and maximum return for the city. The Mayor could similarly become the champion of well-designed neighbourhoods across the city by:

POLICY 5: A LONDON COMMISSIONER FOR STREET DESIGN

Appointing a 'Street Design Commissioner' to help local communities and Councillors articulate the design vision for their communities. The Street Design Commissioner would advise the Mayor on 'calling in' applications which fail the test of high quality local design that builds neighbourhoods.

POLICY 6: A LONDON WIDE 'STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT' FOR ALL NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The Mayor has a key relationship with big developers looking to build in our city. The next Mayor should bring big developers together to agree a new approach for community consultation. Ensuring that when developers present their plans to local people, they explain how development might look from the beginning and allow local residents to shape their communities in partnership with developers.

POLICY 7: A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR LONDON

Establishing a 'Neighbourhood Plan for Londoners' to assist local people in directing design decisions in their neighbourhoods.

13, *The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), Home Improvements: A Social Justice approach to housing policy, London: CSJ, March 2016*

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A SOCIAL LETTINGS AGENCY FOR LONDON

More and more low-income families in London need to live in the private rented sector as social housing is reserved for those in acute need. However, many low-income families are unable to afford a deposit or advance rent, or are faced with landlords who do not want tenants on benefits.¹⁴

London has a hidden private rental sector challenge: One in three housing benefit claimants in London live in privately rented accommodation, often on short term lets of under 12 months. This means low income London families could face moving house every single year. Short tenancies hit the poorest hardest, forcing them into sudden and frequent moves, making it harder for them to hold down a job and disrupting the education of their children.

POLICY 8: A LONDON SOCIAL LETTINGS AGENCY

An incoming Mayor could look to create new Social Lettings Agencies for London and expand those that are already out there.

Social Lettings Agencies can lease properties from landlords for an agreed period of time (e.g. five years) and commit to paying the rent for this duration regardless of whether the property is occupied or the tenants maintain their rental payments. This allows them to negotiate lower rents than would usually be charged, especially given that tenants involved in these schemes are often considered 'high risk'.

The difference between the rent paid to the landlord and the rent that can be charged from the tenants, can then be used to fund the operating costs of running the scheme, which may include additional support services for tenants and maintenance fees. This would help poorer Londoners into rented properties and out of unstable temporary accommodation.

USING NEW POWERS FROM CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

As devolution to other English regions gathers pace, the Mayor should consider applying for similar devolution to England. Greater Manchester Combined Authority, for example, has been told that Central Government will consider the devolution of any powers to it.

A UNIVERSAL SUPPORT PACKAGE

The London Mayor may want to consider applying for powers over Back to work support, housing, health and the Troubled Families programme. This would allow for the commissioning of a single, joined up service of 'Universal Support' to help people and families in the benefit system back on to their feet. This would be the perfect complement to Universal Credit, the Government's flagship welfare programme, and would help people overcome the barriers that they face to acquiring full-time work. By taking advantage of the moment when people enter the welfare system to assess their needs according to the main life chances measures, 'Universal Support' could provide the services needed to overcome addiction, debt, family instability or poor skills. This would help to alleviate the most acute vulnerabilities and to undermine entrenched worklessness. Just as it could be used to help people enter part-time employment, it could also then help them into full-time work, and ultimately, to up-skill and progress in work, assisting people to earn more than the full-time living wage.

ADDICTION

There are over 40,000 crack users and around 43,000 heroin users in London.¹⁵ This constitutes a major problem impacting on public safety, employment, family and life chances. At present effective treatment for drug addiction is the preserve of the wealthy who can afford to pay for it themselves. If local health budgets were pooled, as discussed above, it would allow the Mayor to commission highly effective residential rehab treatment for addicts in the city, reducing the number of people dependent on hard drugs and reducing crime.

¹⁴, *The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), Home Improvements: A Social Justice approach to housing policy, London: CSJ, March 2016*

¹⁵, *Glasgow Prevalence Estimation, Estimates of the Prevalence of Opiate Use and/or Crack Cocaine Use, 2011/12: Sweep 8 report, Liverpool: John Moores University, May 2014, pp.ii-iii*



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