



SPECTRUM NEWS

Key Commitments of the Disability
Manifesto

General Election 2017

Edited by Robert Droy

Think you know

Disabled People...

Think Again

Key Commitments of The Disability Manifesto

What Disabled People want from our Political Parties

Introduction

This is a summary of the Key Commitments contained within The Disability Manifesto for the 2017 General Election that has been developed by SPECTRUM Centre for Independent Living. It updates our 2015 Manifesto produced in partnership with the South East Network of Disabled People's Organisations (SENDPO).

The 'Disability Manifesto' sets out what we – as Disabled People, citizens and voters – believe to be the key issues in the 2017 General Election and what commitments we would like to see from our political parties.

We encourage everyone to join in the debate on our social media sites using the following hashtags:

#GE2017

#CripTheVoteUK

Employment

We call on all political parties to commit to halving the employment gap for Disabled People over the course of the next Parliament.

We call on all political parties to commit to eradicate the pay gap between Disabled People and non-disabled People.

We call on all political parties to commit to double the number of Disabled People benefiting from Access to Work support in the next 3 years.

Funding for Access to Work, which is proven to be effective in helping Disabled People to move into work and to stay in work, should be increased.

We also call on all political parties to commit to ensuring that Disabled People with complex support requirements have equal access to all employment support programmes.

Welfare Reform

We call on all political parties to commit to undertaking, at the earliest opportunity, a cumulative impact assessment of the impact which welfare reform, changes to social care funding and eligibility criteria and the closure of the ILF will have on Disabled People. All further cuts to welfare benefits for Disabled People should be put on hold until this assessment has been completed.

We further call on all political parties to commit to a government-led inquiry into the incidence of suicides amongst Disabled People linked to benefit sanctions and to cuts in services.

We also call on all political parties to commit to guarantee that no Disabled People will lose vital support as a result of the change from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and to reverse the change to the 20 metre rule.

Care and Support (Social Care)

We call on all political parties to work together to develop a cross party solution to the social care funding crisis; a solution that is long term, sustainable and ensures that those in most need of social care do not have to shoulder the majority of the cost.

We call on political parties to recognise that the social care system is for Disabled People of working age, Disabled Children, as well as for Older People. These different constituencies will have different needs and aspirations, and political parties should develop policies which meet the challenges and ambitions of these differing needs.

We call on all political parties to fund local authorities adequately to ensure they can provide the care and support services to enable local residents to live independently.

We also call on all political parties to commit to increase the funding for social care in line with the EU average as soon as public finances allow. Spending on social care in Britain currently lags well behind, at just 0.9% of GDP, compared to an average of 2% in comparable EU countries.

We also call on all political parties to commit to guarantee the safeguarding of Disabled People in care settings and to legislate to introduce a new criminal offence of ill-treatment or willful neglect of people in health and social care settings.

The NHS

We call on all political parties to commit to eliminating health inequalities faced by Disabled People by 2025. This is a challenging target but one that can be achieved if the will is there to do so.

We also call on all political parties to commit to ensuring that Disabled People are able to access NHS services on an equal basis as everyone else. This can be achieved as part of a wider improvement programme – particularly in primary care, where many people face difficulty accessing services because of restricted opening times and procedures.

We also call on all political parties to commit to ensuring that mental health services are given equal priority to physical health services in the NHS.

We also call on all political parties to guarantee to close, within the first year of the next Parliament, the remaining hospitals in England where People with Learning Difficulties are still being sent, despite promises to end the practice in the wake of the Winterbourne View abuse scandal.

Education

We call on all political parties to commit to reducing the gap in educational outcomes for Disabled school leavers and achieving parity of access to further or higher education for Disabled People by 2025. This is a challenging target but one that can be achieved, if the will is there to do so.

We also call on all political parties to commit to delivering a fully inclusive education system with a range of mainstream and specialist provision to meet the needs of all Deaf and Disabled Students.

We also call on the next Government to carry out an urgent review of exclusions of Disabled Children and those with additional needs, and commit to ending unlawful exclusions.

Immigration

We call on all political parties to promote a more constructive and inclusive approach to immigration, which recognises the social and economic benefits of immigration and cultural diversity.

We call on all political parties to ensure that Disability Equality is built into any plans for overseas aid and providing humanitarian aid in war and conflict regions.

We also call on all political parties to commit to ensuring that Disabled Asylum Seekers displaced as a result of conflict or political oppression will always be treated sympathetically by the UK immigration authorities.

Housing

We call on all political parties to introduce legislation in the next Parliament to require all new housing developments to be built to lifetime home standards, with at least 10% of new housing to be fully wheelchair accessible.

We also call on all political parties to urgently amend the rules on housing benefit under-occupancy charge to prevent housing benefit being cut for Disabled People who have a legitimate need for a second bedroom.

Transport

We call on all political parties to commit to an urgent review of the effectiveness of legislation and public initiatives aimed at improving access to transport (including bus, rail, taxi and transport by air and sea) for Disabled People and to set out what steps they will take in Government to ensure compliance with the UK's obligations on accessible transport under the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons.

Law and Order

We call on all political parties to set out the steps they would take in Government to improve access to the legal system for all Disabled People.

We also call on all political parties to set out what steps they would take in Government to improve the reporting and prosecution of disability-related Hate Crime and to tackle disability-related harassment and bullying in schools.

Political participation

We call on all parties to make a firm commitment to ensure that all of their campaign meetings and election materials are accessible to Disabled People during the forthcoming election.

We also call on the Government to guarantee that all polling stations will be accessible so that no Disabled Person who wishes to vote is prevented from exercising their democratic right.

Exiting the European Union

We call on the political parties to commit to the following actions in relation to Brexit:

- **All EU-based disability rights existing at the time Britain leaves the EU to be maintained**, including those in relation to air and ship travel, web accessibility, accessible goods and services, public procurement and manufactured goods
- **Maintenance of existing disability rights at the time of exit**, including primary legislation remaining unchanged unless there has been detailed parliamentary scrutiny (i.e. no Henry VIII clauses which would permit change without scrutiny); and secondary legislation to be left in place with no watering down and no inadvertent discarding of, for example, disability equality rules and regulations as 'red tape' .
- **Continued Government commitment to the UK being ahead of the curve on disability rights** – fully committing to implementing standards equivalent to the new European Accessibility Act once passed, building human rights clauses into future trade agreements and at least matching future progressive developments in EU disability rights law.
- **At least matching current EU funding in real terms of Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) and disability rights** – this includes EU funding that supports a) Disabled People's participation and voice b) independent living c)

other UN Convention rights and d) research on issues of importance to Disabled People to be matched by the UK Government, with particular attention given to parts of the UK where loss of EU funding will damage the DPO sector.

- **A full equality impact assessment by Government of plans for freedom of movement**, before those plans are agreed, ensuring no disproportionate impact on a) Disabled EU citizens living in the UK b) carers c) Disabled British citizens living in other EU countries and d) no detrimental impact on Disabled People's independence through reducing the PA workforce. This must involve detailed parliamentary scrutiny and public consultation on plans for EU citizens in the UK in terms of rules about 'self-sufficiency' and requirements for 'comprehensive health insurance'
- **Continued mutual recognition initiatives useful to Disabled People** - for instance, badges to enable Disabled People to park and cards offering other access and benefits.
- **Giving the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) heightened status in domestic UK law** - increasing the influence and impact of the UNCRPD on tackling discrimination and advancing equality.
- **Continued commitment to the European Convention on Human Rights**

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

We call on all political parties to state a firm commitment to ensuring full compliance with the UK's obligations under the UNCRPD and to set out what steps they will take in Government to address those areas where the UK is found by the UN Committee to not be fully compliant.

For the full version of the SPECTRUM 'Disability Manifesto', please visit our website page

<http://spectrumcil.co.uk/uncategorized/spectrum-2017-disability-manifesto-out-now/>

or use the contact details on the back cover



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