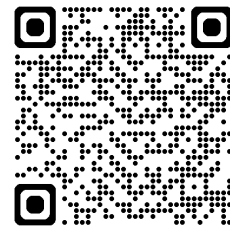


LABOUR LEFT INTERNATIONALISTS



June 2026

Makerfield victory: now a change of direction needed, not just better messaging

Andy Burnham has won Makerfield with comfortably over half the vote, in an area where Reform gained more than half the vote just five weeks ago in the locals.

This victory is a push-back to Reform at their height, and potentially a turn of the tide.

This result also accelerates the necessary job of removing Starmer. Andy Burnham was clear at his campaign's launch that his campaign was about changing Labour: "My own party needs to change - a vote for me in this by-election is a vote to change Labour - to be a party that is solidly on the side of working class people and working class communities".

Within a week of the local elections, there were around 100 Labour MPs calling for a leadership election, according to LabourList. It seems inevitable that Starmer will be challenged sooner or later - inevitable, and necessary. But any leadership election - whenever it comes, must be an opportunity for a thoroughgoing debate on the direction of the party.

It is to be hoped that the Socialist Campaign Group MPs put up a candidate and fight for sufficient nominations. We urge union and party branches to discuss and support that candidacy once known, and to call on their MPs to nominate.

NEC - stick to the rules this time

Harriet Harman is already lobbying for the a leadership election to take place just among MPs, preventing party members and affiliates from having any role. It seems unlikely she will be successful in that, but it is part of a campaign from the right to constrain the contest, once it comes. Party rules allow CLPs and affiliates to nominate any PLP member of their choice. But for last year's Deputy Leader contest, the NEC invented a new rule; they declared that the PLP nominations would come first, and that the outcome of this invented 'first stage' would limit the rights of CLPs and affiliates.

We urge CLPs and affiliates to pass motions to be sent to the NEC, calling for no undermining of the rules whenever the leadership election comes.

Burnham

There is no doubt that Burnham is widely seen - within the public as well as the party - a representing something different to Starmer. He talks about government having been on the wrong course for four decades (implicitly disavowing

the Blair government and his own part in it) and the damage done by successive privatisations.

He calls for "the biggest council housing building programme since the Second World War", for "care on NHS terms", and more improved public transport - with the GM Bee Network presented as showing what can be done.

Burnham has been accused of backsliding on things like public ownership, (as he has on some other things) but actually when he refers carefully to 'public control', rather than 'public ownership' this is accurate for Manchester's buses and trams, that are privately owned (and profited from) but publicly commissioned. Mayoral commissioning has enabled some improvements to be made for passengers and clean air, but is very limited in what can be achieved next. It is no answer to Thatcher's privatisations, to the need to control banking, or the challenges of climate change. Campaign Group MP Clive Lewis was absolutely right at the recent Mainstream members' meeting - whilst urging the biggest possible effort for Labour in Makerfield - to point out that 'public control' is what we have with water; what we need is public ownership.

Labour must hold a proper debate across the whole movement on the way forward.

SHA on Wes Streeting

"The question for us in the Socialist Health Association is not whether Starmer goes, but who comes next. Wes Streeting's resignation letter opened, "The results are in and I am pleased to report that I have delivered against the ambitious targets you set for me when I became your Secretary of State for Health and Social Care." We ask whether his tenure actually fixed anything, or whether his excitable rhetoric obscures a record that, on close examination, has brought the NHS closer to its ultimate demise."

<http://bit.ly/4owZTMo>

<https://labourleftint.uk>

This is the 5th issue of a regular bulletin for supporters and friends to print out and distribute in their CLPs. Email lableftint@gmail.com or download from our website. Find more on our website - or use the QR-code top of page.

Defend Trans Rights!

More than 100 MPs have now signed the motion tabled by Nadia Whittome to disapprove the Equality Act 2010: Draft Code of Practice for Services, public functions and associations. It is currently the only available mechanism by which MPs can reject the EHRC's Code of Practice - by being debated and passed within the 40-day scrutiny window. Has yours signed yet?

How to democratise Labour?

The National Policy Forum 2026 consultation has just closed. Many CLPs dutifully sent in submissions, but wondering why they bother; they are still waiting for any response to previous ones (including all those CLPs who conference motions were ruled out and told they had been sent to the NPF instead).

The lack of democracy on party policy is only one way in which the rights of members, CLPs and affiliates have been undermined over the years. We have produced a **Charter for Labour Democracy**, to promote the whole range of democratic changes to fight for. Discuss it in your CLP, or invite a speaker from LLI. Send us in your views, and anything you think we have missed. <https://bit.ly/4fHFUYS>

Jess Barnard reinstated! - back her for the NEC

We need NEC members who can be part of pushing for party democracy and a change of direction:

Jess Barnard L1204334

Gemma Bolton L1405940

Yasmine Dar L1173052

Minesh Parekh L1230833

Cat Arnold L1452611

Jovan Owusu-Nepaul L1232610

Kerry Postlewhite L1212372

See clpd.org.uk for information on Jess, Gemma, Yasmine and Minesh, and www.mainsteamLabour.org for Cat, Jovan and Kerry - and nominations for NPF on those sites too. **Nominations close 12 noon, Friday 26 June.**

Free Yaser Ahmadinejad

As trade unionists and left-wing and Labour activists we express our solidarity with the Iranian comrade and labour activist Yaser Ahmadinejad who has been jailed for 33 months by Iran's rigged courts working for the clerical dictatorship. He was accused of propagandising against the Islamic Republic, threatening behaviour and publishing lies. Yaser, a militant worker, previously worked for the Arkan Sales

drilling company that supplies contract workers to work in Iran's oil and gas fields. He was victimised in 2024 for demanding a pay rise, and voicing the demands of workers in the oil fields.

We demand the immediate release of Yaser Ahmadinejad. We demand an end to the persecution of Iranian labour activists and the release of all political prisoners in Iran

Add your name: <https://bit.ly/43AEZ5h>.
Trades unions and Labour MPs must take up this and other cases.

'After the Review'

The SEA's new book on the school curriculum now available - email info@socialisteducationalassociation.org for more information or to order.

Movement on EU?

Over the last five months more and more positive noises about the relationship with the EU have been emanating from the Labour Government, the PLP and some Labour Mayors. These include Starmer's unfortunately dated 1st April speech and Reeves' Mais Lecture speech.

Earlier this month even the Labour Movement for Europe has moved from its "anything but the single market" line, to a call to "Rip up the Redlines", and for the European Movement, an organisation of 250,000 members, to call for the UK to rejoin the single market. It's unfortunate that the Government just can't seem to meet the goals that its rhetoric sets, as seen by this report, in the Guardian where the Government's big idea for rescuing the Reset is a "single market for goods". It confirms what the House of Commons select committee said in a devastating and frank report, published on a web page entitled, 'UK-EU reset lacks "direction, definition and drive"'. Its chairperson, Emily Thornberry, is quoted as saying "Sadly, we found that despite progress in some areas, the Government's reset is languishing, suffering from a lack of direction, definition and drive. It feels as though we are on a journey with no clear destination. In many areas, the Government has failed to provide timelines, milestones, or priorities and it does not appear to have an ambitious,

strategic vision for the UK's new relationship with the EU."

Some contributions to the debate, seem to be an attempt to place a firewall between the views of Labour's members and the majority of people in the country and the political direction of the government. It might be pleasing to see Wes Streeting's comments in the light of this movement within the Party and its supporters. He described it as a catastrophic mistake, but we need to recognise that this could be designed as a trap for Andy Burnham who has to win a by-election in an area that 10 years ago voted strongly to leave the EU. Certainly, Burnham's response has not been particularly sure-footed.

Rejoining the EU needs a mandate, but rejoining the customs union and single market would be simple steps that do not and the coming European Partnership Bill may be a suitable vehicle to make these changes. Certainly the current Labour leadership lacks the ambition and vision to take this opportunity and also lacks the ability or motivation to understand what the EU wants.

Read online, with the links to references: <https://bit.ly/3QiFHRt>

More online:

GM Mayoral by-election

Stop Labour accomodation with Reform in Birmingham

Party Membership figures,

May NEC

Makerfield Report

Use the QR code on the front page