

LABOUR LEFT INTERNATIONALISTS



July-August 2026

For answers, look to Party democracy!

Andy Burnham is now leader of the Labour Party. It is good that Starmer had been replaced. It is good that in replacing him Burnham has implicitly disavowed his own past in the Blair government, and has apologised for the party's weaknesses on Gaza and the West Bank. But that does not mean looking to Burnham for answers. Not just because some answers he is giving are only partial or weak - or wrong - but because we are a democratic movement and answers come from our own policy-making.

It is a pity that in apologising over weaknesses on Palestine, Burnham did not refer to the policy in the Unison-Aslef emergency motion passed at conference 2025. It is a pity that in signalling a move away from "40 years of a wrong direction" he does not refer to the demands of Unite-CWU composite 14 passed, calling for collective workers' rights, reversing austerity, and wealth tax. It is a pity that in talking about immigration he did not refer to policy of the Unison-GMB composite 13 passed, for "halting any moves to retrospectively extend the qualifying period for leave to remain", and the importance of workers being able to "challenge bad employers without the threat of deportation".

Our role as party members is not simply to wait for what the new leader decides, but to be part of that democratic process and to fight for it to be sovereign - a policy-making conference, abolition of the NPF, and full debate in the party of the sort that should have happened in a leadership contest. Burnham has talked of a more democratic regime in the Parliamentary Labour Party, but pointedly not yet about the broader party. We need to organise to pressure him, not just 'hope for the best'.

See online our history of leadership contests and how the franchise for them has widened, and our account of the Starmer fight-back revision of more recent Labour history and other terms on our blog - use the QR-code above.

Public ownership of water

It is to be hoped that the London Regional Conference gets a chance to vote for public ownership of Thames Water - as the North West Regional Conference did with United Utilities in 2025. Pressure is building up - public control requires public ownership. See motions for adaptation at <https://bit.ly/4fhiZSe> (or find via QR-code above).

Immigration and asylum

"The government could have brought a bill today containing evidence-based policies that would actually fix our broken asylum system, for example a not-for-profit asylum accommodation system to improve living conditions and integration, genuinely safe roots are not severely restricted and heavily capped, fast tracking obviously well-founded asylum cases such as those from war zones. But instead, I'm ashamed to say that this immigration and asylum bill is a betrayal of our party's values and I cannot support it. I urge the government to withdraw this bill and instead work with sector organisations and experts to create an immigration and asylum system rooted in compassion, justice and human rights."

Nadia Whittome, in parliament

Rule changes in 2026?

Under current rules, rule-changes submitted by CLPs come up for consideration the year *after* they are submitted. So in September 2026 conference should be considering rule changes submitted by CLPs in 2025. However, CLPs don't know which those rule changes will be! (The CAC doesn't publish them until they come before conference; they remain "under cover").

If your CLP submitted a rule change in June 2025, please let us know: lableftint@gmail.com. Read more at <https://bit.ly/4a57Ztp> (or via QR-code).

NEC Elections

Voting starts this month for the NEC. We need NEC members who can be part of pushing for party democracy and a change of direction - we urge a vote for:

Jess Barnard L1204334

Gemma Bolton L1405940

Yasmine Dar L1173052

Cat Arnold L1452611

Jovan Owusu-Nepaul L1232610

Kerry Postlewhite L1212372

See clpd.org.uk for information on Jess, Gemma, Yasmine and Minesh, and www.mainstreamlabour.org for Cat, Jovan and Kerry.

National Policy Forum

The NPF should be abolished, but one of the last and most powerful policy tools left to CLPs is a reference back of the report. This is a right established in the rules (Clause III-1-G).

Guidance issued last year was as follows, although one had to look very hard for it. Only one reference back per policy commission from each organisation is permitted with a maximum of four per organisation.

Reference backs should be submitted to the CAC by 5pm, 11 September by emailing cac@labour.org.uk. Submissions should include which precise section of the document they wish to refer back, and briefly outline the basis on which they wish to do so.

Critically, these cannot be written until the NPF report is published which has historically been in the 1st week of August. The timetable and deadline will differ from last year. The documentation of these Reference Backs is very poor. Neither their submitters nor their text are documented in the delegates report nor the CAC reports. See <https://labour.org.uk/resources/annual-conference-reports/>

LONDON

Restore Democracy

London Regional Office has a sad history of failing to serve its members. At least some of the disaster that befell the party earlier this year needs to be laid at their doors.

The Party's rules state that the purpose of the Regional Executive is to, ... assist the NEC in promoting and building the Labour Party at all levels within the region. This REC will encourage all Party organisations to build and consolidate membership of the Labour Party, assist in the induction of new members and encourage their participation in the campaigning and policy making activities of the Labour Party.

In the run up to GE 2024, we know that many CLPs had candidates imposed on them, with questionable balloting processes, which in one case, Croydon East, led to police investigations and criminal prosecution. Their interference and manipulation in council selections equally fails to serve the interests of party democracy and the electorate which we seek to serve. They have failed to allow the election of local government committees and replaced them in some places by appointed interim committees.

Three CLPs have been suspended for over five years, again alienating members and voters and nearly losing control of Newham Council, where the Greens supported the Labour Group at the AGM. This control and the ignoring of democratic accountability has led in some cases to purges of those councillors deemed inconvenient, often due to their support for Palestinian rights. Four years ago the activities of the regional committee led to the unjust exclusion of many councillors, taking the decision away from ward party members. Across London, a review of the ethnic monitoring data might expose more events where the Party has failed to meet its own rules.

C5.I.E.i The Party will take action in all selections to encourage a greater level of representation and participation of groups of people in our society who are currently under-represented in our democratic institutions. In particular, the Party will seek to select more candidates who reflect the full diversity of our society in terms of gender, race,

sexual orientation and disability, and to increase working class representation

Enabling the removal of these councillors, and the creation of a sense of impunity within the full time staff cadre is a serious failure, predicted by Martin Forde, in building the party and its democracy.

We are also concerned that the provisions which allow for individuals to have membership removed or denied on the grounds they have committed prohibited acts could be exploited for factional purposes.

Dr Forde, The Forde Report

The scale of the disaster in London should not be underestimated. A large number of MP seats are now in jeopardy. The electorate is much more volatile than it once was; those who have voted Green may find they like it.

Our REC must hold the Regional office to account - and in turn make itself accountable to the Regional Conference.

Where are the motions?

Delegates to the 18th July London Regional Conference are asking why the motions have not been circulated in advance, as they are in other regions (NW, for example). We can be fairly certain that public ownership of London's water will be on the agenda, but what of London's education, housing, workers' rights, or other issues? With only 90 minutes of conference time allocated for motions, we are not holding our breath. And once again, there is no time allocated for a report from the Regional Executive.

Regional Executive

We urge delegates to London Regional Conference to support these candidates for the REC -

Div 1: Steve Garelick

Div 2: Liza Begum

Div 3: Pablo John, Margy Newens

Div 4: Aisha Malik Smith, Matty Stiles

Div 5: Andrew Achilleos, Sabia Kamali

Div 6: Pat Quigley, Matt White

Div 7: Rathu Guhadasan, Freddie Seale

All-London: Jumbo Chan, Emine

Ibrahim

BAME: Ahmed Mahbub

LGBT: Sonny Elton

(Drawn together after discussions with London-based members of *Momentum*, *Mainstream* and other organisations)

SCOTLAND

In early July the Scottish Labour Party head office e-mailed members in Scotland to let them know that the Scottish Executive Committee had launched a review of the party's campaign in last May's Holyrood election.

Members will be given the opportunity to answer 26 questions covering five themes. The questions and themes can simply be summed up as: Why did we lose, and what can we do to avoid it happening again?

The pending inauguration of Burnham as Party national leader has not seen a reversal of the party's electoral fortunes. Scottish Labour's share of the vote slumped still further in two Westminster by-elections held in mid-June. And in a South Lanarkshire council by-election a Labour seat was lost to Reform.

There is therefore a pressing need for a full review of the current state of Scottish Labour. Scepticism about whether this review is a genuine attempt in that direction is justified.

Even so, it is important that activists intervene in the review and make the case for socialist politics.

NORTH-WEST

With Gorton & Denton, the locals, Makerfield, and the GM Mayor by-election, Labour activists in the North West have had only four weeks in 2026 not in the midst of an election campaign. If you can help in the mayoral by-election, find details at

<https://bit.ly/4ynlCcM>. (Mainstream members will have had an email about mobilisations on July 24th and 25th, and Labour Unions are

also mobilising for the 25th:

bit.ly/bev-c).

• Charter for Labour democracy:
bit.ly/44sdyLv



<https://labourlefttint.uk>

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