

8 June 2017 – General Election

**What the manifestos are saying about Just Fair’s Ten priorities to protect and promote economic and social rights**

	Conservatives	Labour	Lib Dems	Greens	UKIP	SNP	Plaid Cymru
Human Rights Act	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green
Brexit and economic and social rights	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey
Tax avoidance and tax abuse	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Social security system to ensure an adequate standard of living	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Impact assessment of welfare reforms	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Socio-economic equality duty	Grey	Green	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Green	Grey
Right to health for all	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey
Legal aid	Grey	Green	Green	Grey	Grey	Grey	Yellow
Bring economic and social rights home	Grey	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Grey	Yellow	Grey
Accept international mechanisms	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey

Key: Green, Encouraging; Yellow, Unclear or insufficiently developed; Red, Worrying; Grey, Silent

1. Retain and support the **Human Rights Act 1998**, and remain committed to the European Convention on Human Rights.

<a href="#">Conservatives</a>	"We will not repeal or replace the Human Rights Act while the process of Brexit is underway but we will consider our human rights legal framework when the process of leaving the EU concludes. We will remain signatories to the European Convention on Human Rights for the duration of the next parliament." (p. 37)
<a href="#">Labour</a>	"The Conservatives threaten our Human Rights Act and may withdraw us from the European Convention of Human Rights. Labour will retain the Human Rights Act." (p. 80)
<a href="#">Liberal Democrats</a>	"Liberal Democrats believe that we should all be free from an overreaching state and that the individual freedoms guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act are central to a free and democratic society." (p. 7)
<a href="#">Greens</a>	"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." (p. 21)
<a href="#">UKIP</a>	"Repeal Labour's Human Rights legislation and remove the UK from the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights." (p. 41)
<a href="#">SNP</a>	"We will fight to protect human rights across the UK. SNP MPs will oppose any attempts by the UK government to scrap the Human Rights Act and withdraw the UK from the ECHR." (p. 30)
<a href="#">Plaid Cymru</a>	"We will publish a human rights charter for Wales to defend Welsh people against the backdrop of a Tory government intent on undermining the Human Rights Act." (p. 39)

2. Ensure that the **Great Repeal Bill** or equivalent legislation does not lead to any regression in the protection of human rights, including economic and social rights. The protective effect of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights must be retained.

Conservatives	"We will not bring the European Union's Charter of Fundamental Rights into UK law." (p. 37) "We will enact a Great Repeal Bill. [...] The bill will convert EU law into UK law, allowing businesses and individuals to go about life knowing that the rules have not changed overnight. This approach means that the rights of workers and protections given to consumers and the environment by EU law will continue to be available in UK law at the point at which we leave the EU. The bill will also create the necessary powers to correct the laws that do not operate appropriately once we have left the EU, so our legal system can continue to function correctly outside the EU. Once EU law has been converted into domestic law, parliament will be able to pass legislation to amend, repeal or improve any piece of EU law it chooses, as will the devolved legislatures, where they have the power to do so." (p. 36)
Labour	"We will drop the Conservatives' Great Repeal Bill, replacing it with an EU Rights and Protections Bill that will ensure there is no detrimental change to workers' rights, equality law, consumer rights or environmental protections as a result of Brexit." (p. 25)
Liberal Democrats	"Defending social rights and equalities: Many important protections such as the right to 52 weeks' maternity leave and rights to annual leave are currently based on EU law, and many of these rights have been upheld at the European Court of Justice. Liberal Democrats will fight to ensure that these entitlements are not undermined. Maintaining environmental standards: The European Union has created the highest environmental standards in the world. We have a duty to

	future generations to protect our environment and tackle climate change. Liberal Democrats will ensure that everything is done to maintain those high standards in UK law, including the closest possible co-operation on climate and energy policy.” (p. 11)
Greens	“We will be actively campaigning to safeguard jobs, uphold basic rights and put environmental protection at the heart of any future trade deals.” (p. 9)
UKIP	“Parliament must resume its supremacy of law-making without restriction. Britain must be completely free from the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice.” (p. 7)
SNP	“Brexit threatens the fundamental rights that people in the UK currently enjoy, including workers’ rights, as well as vital social and environmental protections. SNP MPs will hold the Tories to account to ensure that the rights and protections currently safeguarded by EU membership are not diminished after the UK leaves.” (p. 30)
Plaid Cymru	(Nothing specific)

### 3. Clamp down on **tax avoidance and cross-border tax abuse**.

Conservatives	“We have taken vigorous action against tax avoidance and evasion, closing the tax gap – the difference between the amount of tax due and the amount collected – to one of the lowest in the world. We will now go further. We will legislate for tougher regulation of tax advisory firms. We will take a more proactive approach to transparency and misuse of trusts. We will improve HMRC’s capabilities to stamp down on smuggling, including by improving our policing of the border as we leave the European Union. We will also take further measures to reduce online fraud in Value Added Tax. [...] We welcome overseas investment and want investors to succeed here but not when success is driven by aggressive asset-stripping or tax avoidance. We will update the rules that govern mergers and takeovers. This will require careful deliberation but we can state now that we will require bidders to be clear about their intentions from the outset of the bid process; that all promises and undertakings made in the course of takeover bids can be legally enforced afterwards; and that the government can require a bid to be paused to allow greater scrutiny.” (p. 17)
Labour	“We will take on the social scourge of tax avoidance through our Tax Transparency and Enforcement Programme, and close down tax loopholes.” (p. 9) “By reforming the rules our companies operate under, we can make sure they stay focused on delivering shared wealth. Labour will amend company law so that directors owe a duty directly not only shareholders, but to employees, customers, the environment and the wider public, and we will consult on bringing forward appropriate legislation within this Parliament.” (p. 17) “Banning payroll companies, sometimes known as umbrella companies, which create a false structure to limit employers’ tax liabilities and limit workers’ rights.” (p. 51)
Liberal Democrats	“Ensure those with the highest incomes and wealth are making a fair contribution. We have identified a series of distortions, loopholes and excessive reliefs that should be removed. These include reforms to Capital Gains Tax and dividend tax relief, and refocusing entrepreneurs’ relief. We would reverse a number of the Conservatives’ unfair and unjustified tax cuts, including: - The cutting of Corporation Tax from 20% to 17%. - Capital Gains Tax cuts. - Capital Gains Tax extended relief. - The Marriage Allowance. - The raising of the Inheritance Tax threshold. Take tough action against corporate tax evasion and avoidance, including by: - Introducing a General Anti-Avoidance Rule, setting a target for

	<p>HM Revenue and Customs to reduce the tax gap, and continuing to invest in staff to enable them to meet it. - Reforming Corporation Tax to develop a system that benefits the smallest companies while ensuring the biggest multinationals cannot avoid paying sums comparable to nationally based competitors. We will consult on shifting away from a profits-based tax to one that takes account of a wider range of economic activity indicators, such as sales and turnover. - Reviewing the Business Rates system, prioritising reforms that recognise the development of the digital economy, lessening the burden on smaller businesses, and ensuring high streets remain competitive. We will also consider the implementation of Land Value Taxation.</p> <p>Conduct a full-scale review into the burden of taxation and spending between generations to ensure that government policy promotes fairness between generations.” (pp. 39-40)</p>
Greens	<p>“Ensure that everyone pays their fair share of tax and there is a crackdown on tax dodging. Reform taxation to include a wealth tax on the top 1% of earners, investing in more staff at HMRC so they can work more effectively, and reinstate the higher level of corporation tax for large businesses. A Robin Hood tax on high value transactions in the finance sector, and inheritance taxed according to the wealth of the recipient.” (p. 5)</p>
UKIP	<p>“When we leave the EU, we will close the loophole allowing businesses to pay tax in whichever EU or associated country they choose, and bring in any further measures necessary to prevent large multinational corporations using aggressive tax avoidance schemes.” (p. 12)</p>
SNP	<p>“We will back tax proposals that promote fairness, while raising the revenues required to protect the public services we all rely on. [...] We support an increase in the Additional Rate from 45p to 50p across the UK as a whole from 2018/19. [...] We will support the reversal of the married couple’s allowance, the reversal of the reductions to the bank levy and introduction of a tax on bankers’ bonuses. We will not support further reductions to Corporation Tax. [...] SNP MPs will back improvements to tax collection and tougher action on tax avoidance, including: • a moratorium and review of the closure of HMRC offices in Scotland and across the UK; • beneficial ownership of companies and trusts to be made public; • measures to improve the transparency of tax paid by major international companies; • and further action by the UK government to tackle international tax avoidance.” (pp. 15-16)</p>
Plaid Cymru	<p>“Where we are: The most underpowered Parliament in all of the UK. Wales at the whim of a Tory government determined to slash taxes for the rich and let the poorest bear the burden.” (p. 14)</p>

4. Restore the link between benefits and costs of living in order to guarantee that the **social security system ensures an adequate standard of living** for all.
5. Conduct a comprehensive **impact assessment of the effects of the welfare reforms** introduced since 2012 and review the use of sanctions in relation to welfare benefits.

Conservatives	<p>“We will continue to run the welfare system in accordance with our belief that work is the best route out of poverty, that work should always pay, and that the system should be fair both to the people in need of support and those who pay for it. We have no plans for further radical welfare reform in this parliament and will continue the roll-out of Universal Credit, to ensure that it always pays to be in work.” (p. 54)</p> <p>“We will continue to ensure a sustainable welfare system, with help targeted at those who need it most. We will legislate to give unemployed</p>
---------------	---

	disabled claimants or those with a health condition personalised and tailored employment support.” (p. 57)
Labour	Section “Dignity for those who cannot work” contains substantive pledges to reverse some of the reforms made to the welfare system in recent years (pp. 56-57)
Liberal Democrats	Section “Treating people fairly” (pp. 59-60)
Greens	“Redress benefits injustice with a social security system that gives everyone confidence they will get support when they need it, including disabled people.” (p. 11)
UKIP	“Protect the rights of the disabled. Scrap the bedroom tax.” (p. 31)
SNP	“SNP MPs will vote against further cuts to social security. We will also press for the abolition of the two child cap on tax credits and the associated Rape Clause. And we will vote to ensure that benefits increase at least in line with CPI inflation.” (p. 7) “SNP MPs will continue to call for the Scottish Parliament to have full control over all social security benefits, so that we can deliver a system based on dignity and respect that is tailored to the needs of all the people of Scotland. [...] The SNP believes that the UK social security system, paid for by all of us, should provide a safety net for all low income families, to ensure that even in the most difficult times we can all make the best futures for our children.” (p. 32) (More on the Scottish Government’s policies on p. 36)
Plaid Cymru	“We want to see powers over social security devolved to Wales. We would use those powers, for example, to ban private firms from carrying out benefits assessments for profit.” (p. 26)

6. Tackle growing inequality by bringing into force the public sector socio-economic equality duty of [section 1 of the Equality Act 2010](#).

Conservatives	(Nothing specific)
Labour	“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.” (p. 108) “Reinstate the legal requirement forcing public bodies to try to reduce inequalities. The socioeconomic duty would have required all public bodies to assess whether they were addressing inequalities caused by class factors, encouraging them to improve, for example, health and education outcomes in more deprived areas. This was scrapped by Theresa May in 2010.” (Confirmed by email)
Liberal Democrats	Section “Rights and equalities” (pp. 70-71)
Greens	(Nothing specific)
UKIP	(Nothing specific)
SNP	“As Home Secretary Theresa May scrapped the socioeconomic duty contained in the Equality Act requiring public bodies to evaluate the impact of their policies to reduce inequality. SNP MPs will seek an early opportunity to pursue a Bill at Westminster to ensure the UK government commences this important duty.” (p. 33)
Plaid Cymru	(Nothing specific)

7. Provide **maternal healthcare** for all women regardless of their nationality and immigration status, and protect NHS patients' data and free access to healthcare making sure that the **Home Office does not have access to migrants' information** stored by the NHS.

Conservatives	(Nothing specific)
Labour	(Nothing specific)
Liberal Democrats	(Nothing specific)
Greens	(Nothing specific)
UKIP	(Nothing specific)
SNP	(Nothing specific)
Plaid Cymru	(Nothing specific)

8. Review the impact of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 with a view to ensuring access to justice and provision of free **legal aid** services to those in need in civil justice procedures related to housing, health and welfare rights.

Conservatives	(Nothing specific)
Labour	"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." (pp. 80-81)
Liberal Democrats	"Conduct an urgent and comprehensive review of the effects of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act on access to justice, particularly funding for social welfare appeals, and domestic violence and exceptional cases. Reverse the massive increases in court and tribunal fees, which prevent many from pursuing good cases." (p. 75)
Greens	(Nothing specific)
UKIP	(Nothing specific)
SNP	(Nothing specific)
Plaid Cymru	"We will reverse cuts to legal aid and bring forward new laws to protect victims of crimes such as rape and domestic abuse so that they can give evidence in court without being intimidated." (p. 38)

9. Incorporate the international standards on **economic and social rights into domestic law**, ensuring that victims of violations of economic and social rights have full access to effective legal remedies.

Conservatives	(Nothing specific)
Labour	"A Labour government will ensure Britain abides by the global Labour standards of the ILO conventions." (p. 48) "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.” (p. 56) “Labour believes in the social model of disability – that it is society which disables people, and it is our job to remove those barriers. The previous Labour government signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The next Labour government will sign the UNCRPD into UK law.” (p. 113) “We will enshrine the European Convention on the Rights of the Child into domestic law.” (p. 87)
Liberal Democrats	“Enshrine the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in UK law.” (p. 71)
Greens	“Ensuring that every child with Special Educational Needs or Disability has access to a mainstream education, in accordance with the UN Convention for Persons with Disabilities.” (p. 13)
UKIP	(Nothing specific)
SNP	“Working with disabled people and organisations that represent them, the Scottish Government has produced an action plan for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Scotland. The UN committee responsible for the Convention is currently assessing its implementation in the UK. The UK government should fully engage with the investigation, implement its findings and work towards the incorporation of the Convention in UK law.” (p. 37)
Plaid Cymru	(Nothing specific)

10. Sign and ratify the 2008 Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and ratify the 1996 Revised European Social Charter 1996 to allow individuals and groups to **appeal to independent international bodies** when their economic and social rights have been violated in the UK.

Conservatives	(Nothing specific)
Labour	(Nothing specific)
Liberal Democrats	(Nothing specific)
Greens	(Nothing specific)
UKIP	(Nothing specific)
SNP	(Nothing specific)
Plaid Cymru	(Nothing specific)