

Labour

Focus on growing the economy and improving living standards. Ministers were promoting the government's work on education, the NHS, as well as the economy.

It is expected that higher taxes will be raised in this year's budget (26th November)

Health and social care:

- NHS Online – a new 'online hospital' that will allow patients to book tests, access prescriptions, receive clinical advice and manage appointments through the NHS app. This will help to optimise existing health and care workforces through efficiency gains, including better use of AI and digital tools. This is expected to deliver an extra 8.5 million appointments over three years.
- 43 pilot sites across England to test new approaches to multidisciplinary working, part of the shift from hospital to community.
- £500 million to be invested in a Fair Pay Agreement for care workers, with the aim of improving pay and conditions for the long-undervalued workforce.
- 10-year plan consultation now open

Immigration:

- The time requirement for migrants to qualify for indefinite leave to remain has increased from 5 to 10 years.
- The conditions allowing individuals to apply for indefinite leave to remain are tightening, for example, the need for community involvement and higher standards of English language proficiency.

Reflection on the 30 hours free childcare a week policy, to financially encourage individuals, particularly in low-paying jobs, to work.

A focus on young people:

- New policy of ensuring 2/3rds of young people go to university or into 'gold standard apprenticeships'.
- A work placement guarantee for those unemployed for 18 months
- Full national rollout of free national breakfast clubs from April and a commitment to putting a library in every primary school across the country by the end of parliament.
- New targeted maintenance grants for students to ensure those at university do not have to work in all their free time to support themselves

Focus on investing in renewable energy sources to create jobs and lower energy bills

Expansion of data centres to meet AI ambitions.

Conservative

Kemi Badenoch

- Announced the complete abolition of Stamp Duty on primary residences.

- Cut civil service to the size it was in 2016
- Ban doctors from going on strike – they believe industrial action has kept NHS waiting lists long

Badenoch introduced a new ‘Golden Rule’, a fiscal principle: at least half of savings from departmental cuts will go to reducing the deficit, and the remainder can be used for tax cuts or growth measures. This is part of her framing that the next Conservative government will not make promises without affordability.

Health & Social Care Announcements

Stuart Andrew (Shadow Sec. for Health & Social Care)

- Emphasised the NHS “free at the point of use” pledge
- Engaging in cross-party talks on the future of social care, framing the problem as long-term demand putting strain on NHS, local government and families. He chaired a “Big Health Vote” debate and prioritised prevention, staff support and innovation.
- Emphasis on social-care talks acknowledges strain, but I found no clear new pledge to increase social-care funding in the material you gave.
- The emphasis is on reform, prevention and value-for-money rather than new money. Providers should plan for tighter commissioning unless social-care reform in the talks includes new funding streams.

“In my first week in this job, I attended the cross-party talks on the future of social care.”

“For too long, governments of both colours have failed to address the increasing demands on social care, which is putting strain on NHS budgets, local government budgets, and the personal budgets of families across the country.”

“We will engage in these talks in the spirit of seeking a genuine long-term solution.”

“It’s not going to be easy, but I believe it’s the right thing to do to sit down and talk and find areas where we can agree.”

The Big Health Vote Roundtable:

Dr. Robert Kilgour, Founder, Social Care Foundation

- *“I’ve been working in social care since I opened my first care home in Scotland in 1989.”*
- *“The vulnerable in our society and the amazing staff that care for them desperately need us to step up and help deliver meaningful social care reform, ideally cross-party.”*
- *“It is a fact that you simply cannot fix the NHS without first fixing social care.”*
- *“If social care collapses, what will happen to our NHS? More bed blocking, more cancelled operations and longer NHS waiting lists.”*
- *“We really must get on the front foot on social care reform. Together, let’s make social care better.”*

Reinforces long-standing sector argument that “you can’t fix the NHS without fixing social care.”

Calls for “meaningful” and “cross-party” reform no explicit funding or workforce pledge, but strong alignment with provider concerns (bed blocking, workforce, sustainability).

Mentions need for “Conservative policy research... urgently in this area” implies the opposition is developing a new social care policy framework.

Dr. Kartik Cavay, GP on primary care reform

- *“GP practices work in ways other parts of the NHS struggle to do so. GP practices are private businesses... Productivity is incentivised. Success is rewarded.”*
- *“Unlike large NHS trusts, GP practices are decentralised, which means they can innovate and adapt to meet patients’ demands.”*
- *“Let GPs compete with hospitals to provide services... at a cheaper rate for the taxpayer.”*
- *“When people no longer have a clinical need to be in hospital, they must be out in the community either at home with a home-care package or in a care home.”*

Strong advocacy for decentralised, private-enterprise-style delivery could imply ideological openness to independent care provision models within the NHS.

Emphasis on hospital discharge into community and care-home settings relevant to delayed discharge and flow funding debates.

Reinforces the role of social care providers in managing NHS pressures.

Sharon Davies, on prevention and physical activity

- *“Since COVID, we’ve lost over 400 swimming pools... nearly half of all children in deprived areas leave school unable to swim 25 metres.”*
- *“Investing in leisure facilities is investing in our local community.”*
- *“Offer free sessions for children, the elderly, those unemployed, and the disabled.”*
- *“Investing in physical fitness... will improve mental and physical well-being and save the NHS money.”*

Advocates public health and prevention investment as cost-saving for the NHS implicitly supports upstream health funding (less hospital/care burden).

Could feed into long-term strategies that influence local authority commissioning and social care well-being duties.

Nick Markham, on health technology

- *“Technology can give us precision medicines, personalised cancer treatments... Our data puts the UK in pole position to transform healthcare and be the Silicon Valley of health tech.”*
- *“We can use AI to read scans quicker, cheaper, and more accurately.”*

Push for digital transformation and AI adoption may affect providers through data-sharing, interoperability, and regulatory expectations.

After the pitches, Stuart Andrew and the panel emphasised integration:

- *“All of this needs to be integrated with GPs at the centre of it. We need to use technology, we need to prevent people from coming to see us, and when they do see us, we need appropriate social care.”*
- *“When people no longer have a clinical need to be in hospital, they must be out in the community either at home with a home-care package or in a care home.”*
- *“If they stay in hospital... it’s more expensive for the taxpayer.”*
- *“Improving quality of life and prevention saves money, so we have funds for other priorities.”*

Fiscal Announcements

Mel Stride Shadow Chancellor

- Conservatives pledged **£47 billion of public spending cuts**
- Emphasised cutting the size of the state, welfare savings and targeted tax cuts
- ‘first job bonus’ – first £5000 from NICs from a young person’s first job will go into a lifetime ISA to be put towards a house deposit or pension.

The austerity framing and the welfare approach indicate a policy mix that expects the care sector to compete for lower-cost domestic labour rather than rely on migration; without targeted funding or commissioning incentives, this risks squeezing pay/conditions.

The announced £47bn savings and emphasis on reducing the size of the state create a real risk of downward pressure on local-authority social-care budgets and NHS transfers that currently support providers.

Focus on value-for-money rather than new money.

Immigration Announcements

Chris Philp Shadow Home Secretary

The party published a hardline “BORDERS Plan”:

- **Leave the ECHR**
- Ban asylum claims for those arriving illegally
- Immediate deportation (or third-country removal) on arrival
- Abolish the Immigration Tribunal and immigration legal aid, and create a large new Removals Force (budget doubled to approx. £1.6bn) with a stated target of removing approx. 150,000 people a year.

This is the most direct policy that will change labour flows. The Conservatives say they would task officials with removing **750,000 illegal immigrants within five years**, under Trump-style deportation plans.

The immigration package (removals, ECHR exit, abolition of some appeals/legal aid) is likely to reduce net inflows of migrant care workers (real and/or perceived). This is an immediate risk to recruitment pipelines that many care providers still rely on.

DWP Announcements

Helen Whately (Shadow DWP Secretary)

- Set out plans to reduce sickness/benefit generosity
- face-to-face assessments
- restrict access for “low-level” mental-health claims
- clamp down on Motability abuse and tighter eligibility, aimed at getting more British people back into work.

She explicitly links welfare reform to the labour supply problem and says the approach will prioritise getting Brits into jobs rather than relying on migration.

Welfare reforms aimed at pushing more British people into work create a potential increase in domestic labour supply over time, but only if (a) pay, training and hours in the sector become attractive enough, and (b) local support (training, transport, childcare) is available. Helen Whately explicitly links benefit reforms to getting people into roles, including social care.

Liberal Democrat

A focus on economic growth and challenging reform. Strong commitments to a proportional voting system.

There isn't more of a focus on social care within Labour's 10-year plan

Health and social care:

- £50 million a year put into reopening ambulance stations, ensuring there is clinical monitoring of patients in A&E rooms, and launching a new community drive for community first responders.
- GP appointments to be made available within 7 days, urgent ones within 24 hours, so fewer people are turning to A&E

Tax:

- Opposition to the government's inheritance tax changes
- Windfall tax on banks to finance lower energy bills, aiming to cut bills in half by 2035
- Oppose NIC increase, particularly seeking relief for the hospitality sector and hospices
- A 'family farm test' which will differentiate between 'real farmers and tax dodgers'

Want to strengthen co-operation with the EU and other allies to stand up to Russia and have closer economic relations with Europe for economic growth purposes.

Green

Focus on being bold, criticising Labour for 'handing this country on a plate' to Reform, and the need to address the extreme wealth in the country.

Health and social care: nothing new announced, existing policy is...

- A wealth tax on the top 1% as a measure to reduce inequality, universal free childcare, funding for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), rural bus routes and climate investment
- To end private water companies, with the aim of reducing water bills.
- Immigration: migrants and refugees are welcome in the UK.
- Climate crisis is adding to the cost of living crisis as it is hitting the poorest communities hardest – there's a need for policies on both.
- Reducing the number of privately rented houses, making more socially rented eg, introducing rent controls, scrapping the right to buy scheme, applying business rates to short-term lets, imposing double council tax on long-term empty properties, and mass building of council houses

Reform

- Remove 600,000 asylum seekers by returning migrants to their countries, even if this required paying money to corrupt governments.
- Leave the European Convention on Human Rights, and replace the Human Rights Act with a British Bill of Rights - These could impact social care judicial challenges
- Health and social care policy: nothing announced?? Existing policies ...
- Scrap net-zero
- Tax changes: lower income tax, increase the personal allowance and abolish inheritance tax
- Increase the number of pensioners on benefits, by reinstating winter fuel payments for all pensioners and ending the two-child benefit cap