More in Common

Will Burnham rebuild Labour's coalition?

Labour Party Conference 2026

Three key tests for this government

Britain is, by its nature, a nation of gradualists - but that patience is wearing thin. In 2024, Britons still preferred gradual change (52 per cent) to radical change (38 per cent). Two years on, that has flipped: 42 per cent now want radical change, and 36 per cent gradual.

The public recognise that change takes time, but in the meantime Britons will need to see that three conditions are being met:

The "gets it" test

Does Andy Burnham understand the public's sense of exhaustion?

Britons overwhelmingly see the political class as self-serving and disconnected. Asked to describe Keir Starmer in a few words, "out of touch" was consistently among the top responses.

This is sharpest on the cost of living. It has topped the public's priorities since the crisis began in 2022, yet most Britons feel the government doesn't share that priority.

A key test for Burnham is showing that he understands.

The "trying" test

Does this government have the will to improve things for ordinary people?

Britons feel that consecutive governments have failed to address their top concerns - be it controlling migration, improving the NHS and public services, or alleviating the cost of living crisis - many have become convinced that politicians lack the *will* to deliver change.

Smaller, tangible interventions cut through, and show voters that - even if fundamental change takes time - you are *trying*.

The "can" test

Does the government have a credible plan to deliver long-term change for Britain?

Understanding and *trying* will be essential for buying this government time, but they will also need to show that they have a realistic plan to deliver change.

Short-term relief on energy bills has helped show that Burnham cares - but Britons want to see that there's a plan to tackle the root causes of the cost of living crisis.

The upcoming Budget will be a key moment to demonstrate credibility.

Introducing the Seven Segments

Introducing the Seven Segments

The British Seven segments were developed to move beyond traditional left-right or party-based analysis by exploring the deeper psychological, cultural and value-driven foundations that shape public opinion.
This approach helps explain why political loyalties have fractured and offers a more nuanced understanding of what drives attitudes on issues like immigration, climate, and the economy—enabling more effective engagement with the public across a fragmented political and social landscape.

More in Common

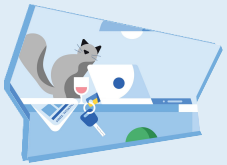
Progressive Activists

...an outspoken group that is politically engaged and globally minded, championing social justice but feeling alienated from mainstream politics

Incrementalist Left

...a group that leans left and trusts institutions, often stepping back from the news and avoiding politically fraught debates

Established Liberals



... a prosperous group that is confident in institutions, values expertise, and believes the system broadly works

Sceptical Scrollers

...a disengaged group that has lost trust in mainstream institutions and increasingly looks online for sources of truth

Rooted Patriots

...a patriotic group that feels overlooked by elites and wants leaders with common sense to protect local identity

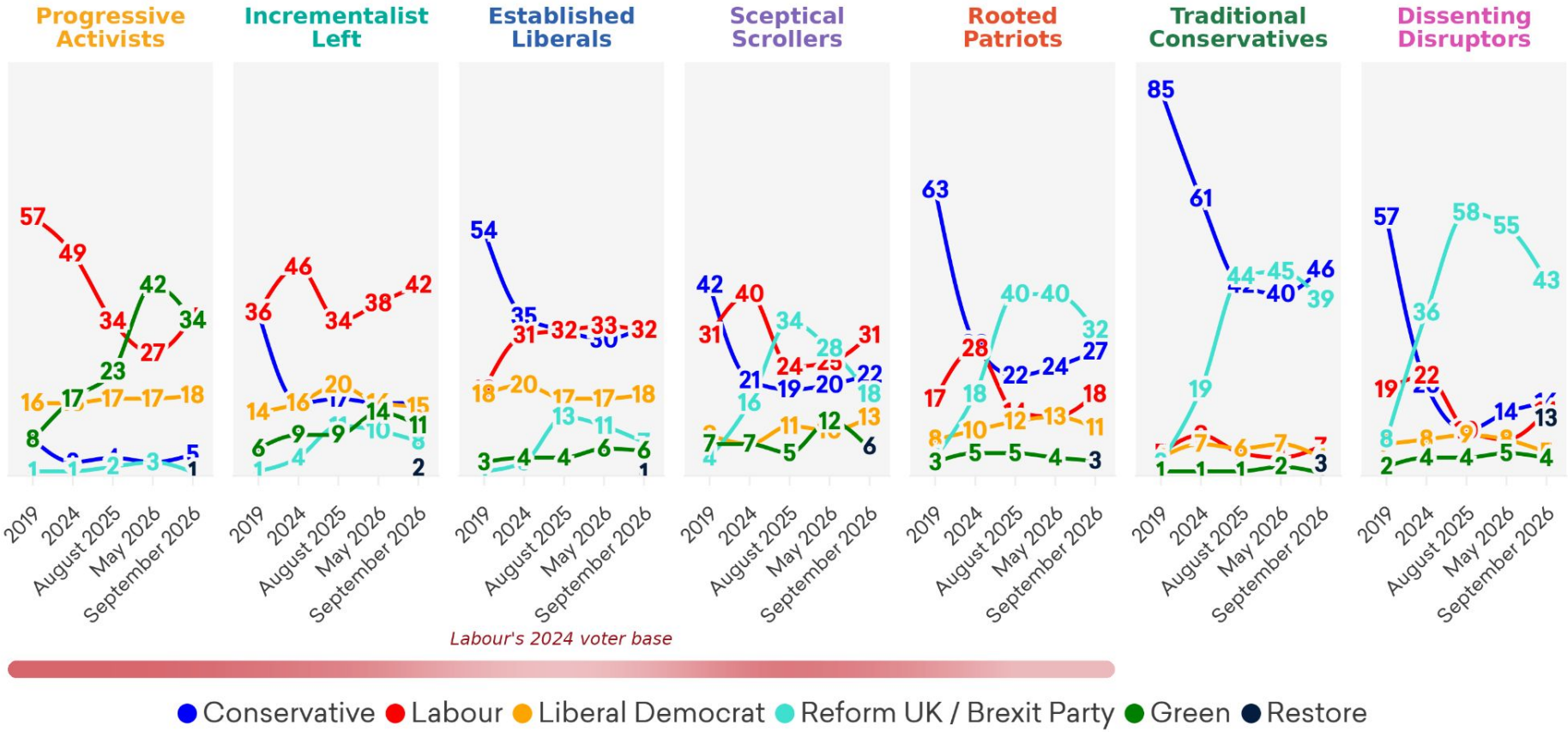
Traditional Conservatives

... a nostalgic group that respects tradition, authority and personal responsibility, while remaining sceptical of rapid change

Dissenting Disruptors

... a frustrated group that craves radical change and backs strong leaders who promise to shake up a broken system

How would the Seven Segments vote today?



More in Common

More in Common • August 2026
2019 and 2024 is recalled General Election vote

1

A Burnham bounce?

More in Common

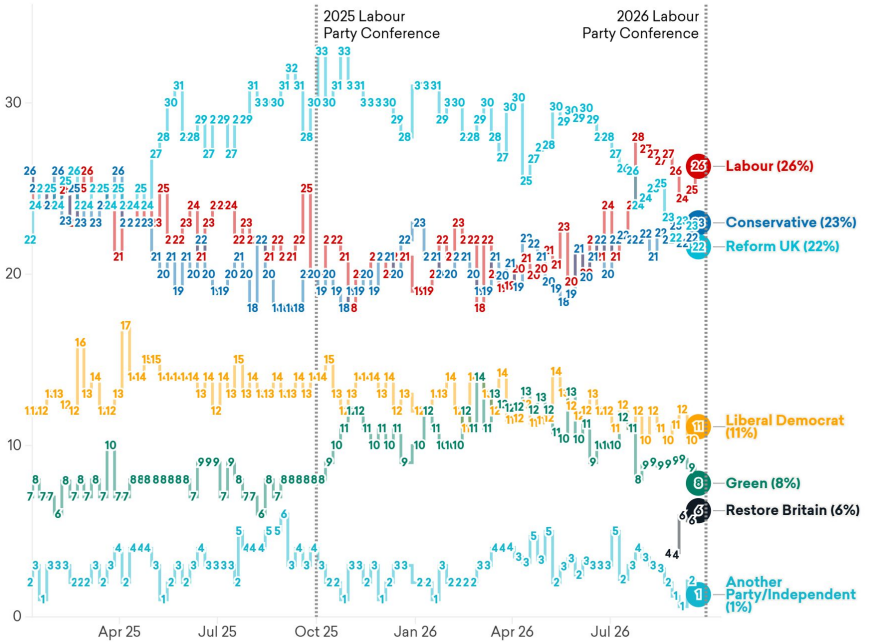
Labour has re-taken the lead, although it remains at a historic low

Labour heads into this conference in a very different position to last year: In September 2025, Labour was hovering at around 20 per cent support, with Reform UK frequently holding leads of ten points or more. At points, fewer than half of those who backed Labour in 2024 said they would still support the party in an election held today.

Now, Labour's vote share has risen to 26 per cent, putting them in the lead, while Reform UK and the Conservatives are jostling for second place.

However, while this is an improvement from Labour's nadir under Keir Starmer, it remains 9 points below their 2024 result, and would mark the worst performance for the Labour Party in a General Election since 1918.

Westminster voting intention over time



More in Common

More in Common • Last fieldwork: 18 - 21 September 2026

Andy Burnham is Britain's most popular party leader

Andy Burnham's net approval rating is +10, with 38 per cent of Britons saying he is doing a good job and 28 per cent saying a bad job.

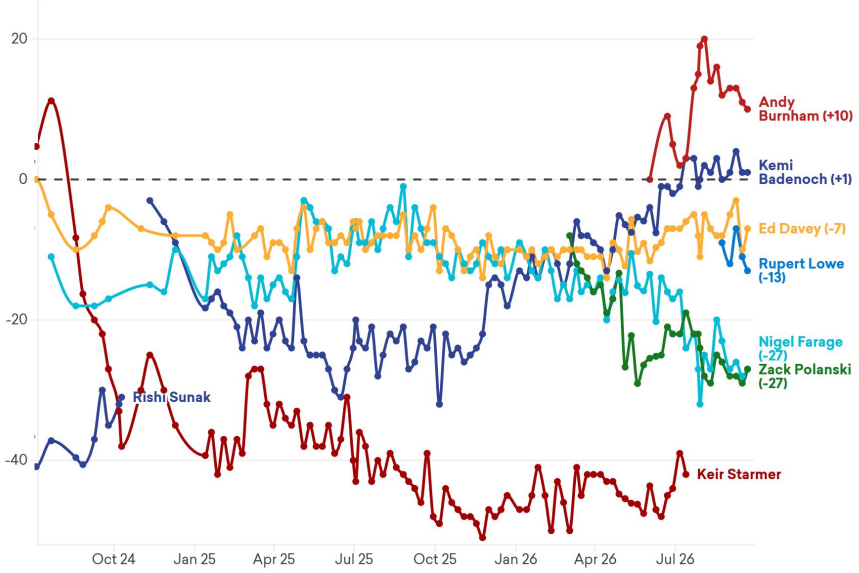
This makes his net approval rating 9 points higher than Kemi Badenoch, and one of only 2 leaders who are net positive.

For reference, this puts Andy Burnham in line with Keir Starmer's all-time high (net approval +11), and he has, at points, been higher, peaking at +20.

Leader approval ratings

Net approval rating

For each of the following, please indicate whether you think they are doing a good job or a bad job?



More in Common • Proportion who think each leader is doing a "somewhat good" or "very good" job, minus those who think they are doing a "somewhat bad" or "very bad" job
Last fieldwork: 18 - 21 September 2026

But Burnham is outperforming his party

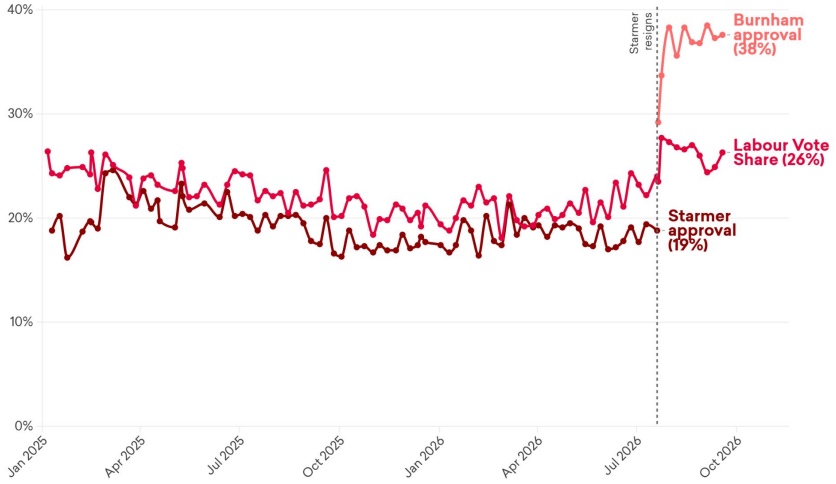
Andy Burnham's personal popularity far exceeds Keir Starmer's, but this has yet to translate into a Labour surge of the same magnitude.. While the proportion of people who believe the Prime Minister is doing a good job has doubled, the proportion voting Labour has only risen by a few points.

In fact, support for Labour is decoupling from approval of its leader. While Keir Starmer slightly underperformed his party throughout his premiership, Andy Burnham's popularity far exceeds his party's support. **Only half (49 per cent) of those who think that Andy Burnham is doing a good job plan to vote Labour.**

This presents a real challenge for the Labour Party: while Andy Burnham presents a real vibe shift from Keir Starmer's leadership, this has yet to detoxify Labour's brand.

Keir Starmer's popularity consistently undershot Labour's support - Andy Burnham's approval is more than tenpoints higher

For each of the following, please indicate whether you think they are doing a good job or a bad job?



More in Common • Last fieldwork: 18 - 21 September 2026

Andy Burnham has had a longer honeymoon than Keir Starmer

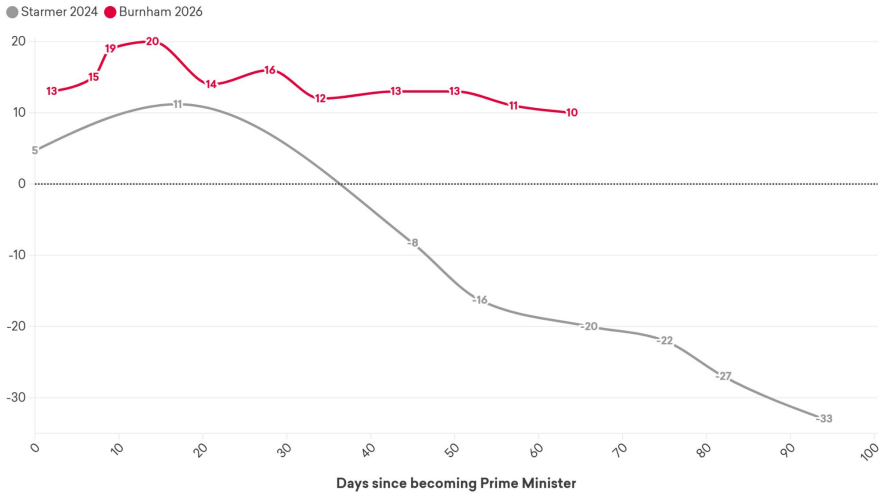
While Keir Starmer's period of positive approval ratings lasted roughly 35 days from the General Election, today is Andy Burnham's 70th day in office, and he remains popular. His "honeymoon" has so far been twice as long as Keir Starmer's.

Positive approval does not always mean enthusiasm. The portion who say they think Andy Burnham is doing a 'very' good job is relatively low at 10 per cent, a similar portion to Nigel Farage, but the portion saying he is doing a very bad job has risen to 17 per cent.

Burnham is avoiding Starmer's approval rating plummet in his early weeks in office

For each of the following, please indicate whether you think they are doing a good job or a bad job?

Net (Good Job- Bad Job)



More in Common

More in Common

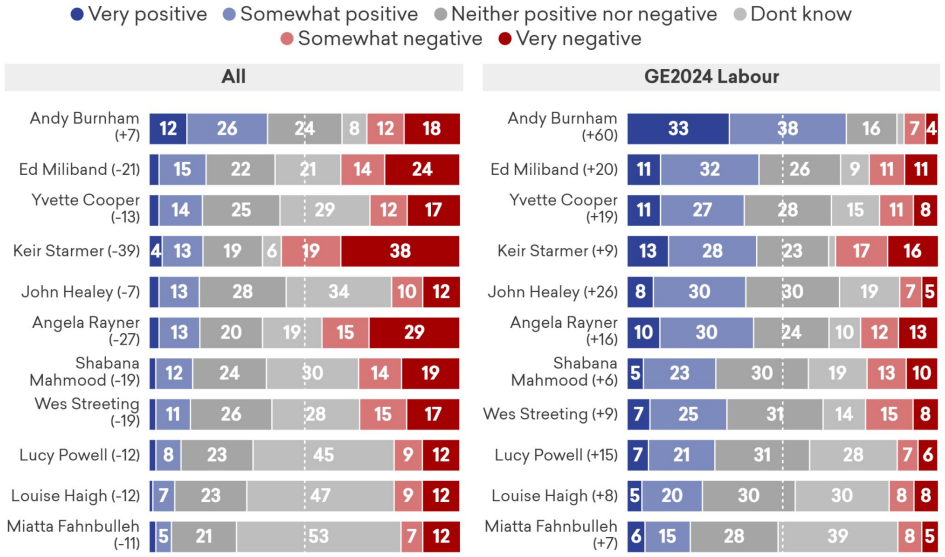
Burnham's wider Cabinet is not widely known or loved

The Prime Minister stands apart from other Labour figures in being a genuinely popular and national figure. Only two cabinet ministers have a majority of the public expressing an opinion of them either way – Ed Miliband and Angela Rayner, who both have negative ratings (–21 and –27). Three in five Britons (62 per cent) either don't know or hold neither positive nor negative feelings toward the Chancellor, John Healey.

Yvette Cooper is viewed positively by the most people, while Angela Rayner is viewed negatively by the most (44 per cent). Among Labour's 2024 voters, Ed Miliband is the most popular.

Labour lacks nationally popular and well known figures outside of Burnham

To what extent do you hold a positive or negative view of the following Cabinet Ministers?



Who is the Burnham bounce?

Labour is winning back progressives, but struggling with the right

The 'Burnham Bounce' in support for Labour has mostly come from winning back the party's progressive defectors.

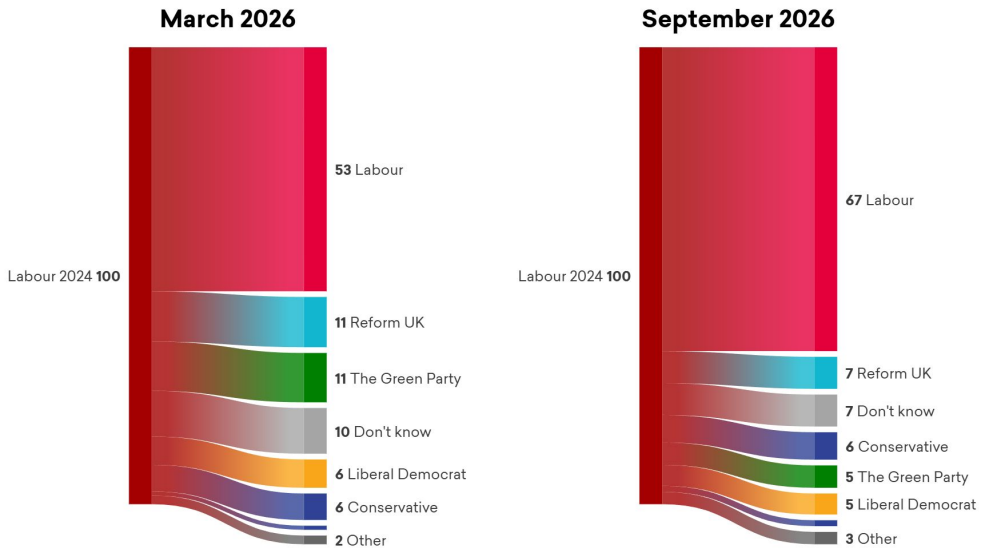
In March 2026, at the height of Polanski's 'Green surge' in the polls, 11 per cent of people who voted Labour in 2024 said they'd vote Green tomorrow. By September, that was down to 5 per cent – Labour has cut its Green losses by more than half. Meanwhile losses to the Liberal Democrats have fallen from 6 per cent to 5 per cent.

Labour has also chipped away at losses to the right, but not to the same extent. In March, Labour was losing 11 per cent of their 2024 voters to Reform UK. That figure is now down to 7 per cent.

Labour is now losing more voters to parties on the right than parties on the left.

Labour have halved the number of voters lost to the Green Party, but has won back fewer from Reform

How Labour's 2024 voters say they'd vote now, March to September 2026



Labour has won ground back on its progressive flank, but not among the more centrist and socially conservative segments

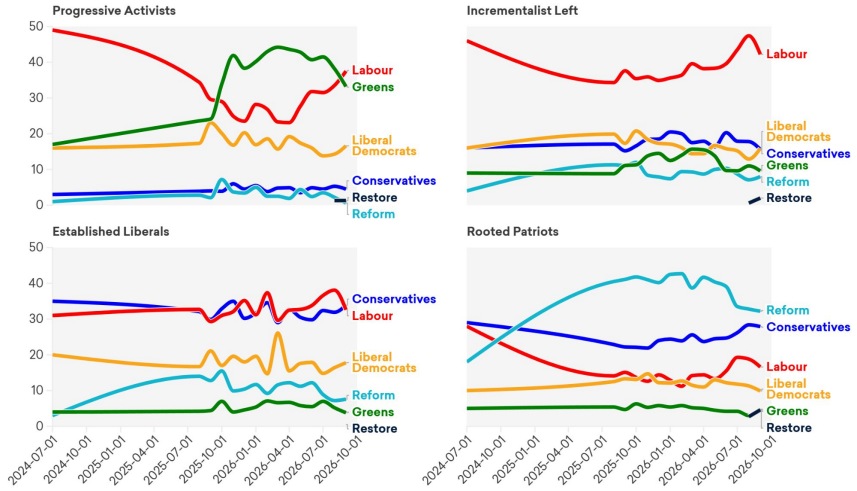
Since Burnham replaced Keir Starmer, Labour has surged among Progressive Activists, but has made less progress among Established Liberals and Rooted Patriots.

For Established Liberals, the top barriers to voting Labour are around economic competence: this group cites a sense that Labour can't be trusted with tax, and won't stimulate growth.

For Rooted Patriots, it's primarily a sense that Labour **hasn't delivered on the cost of living**, **hasn't tackled immigration,** and **hasn't been able to deliver on their promises.**

Labour has won back many progressives, but stagnated with Established Liberals and Rooted Patriots

Monthly average voting intention, omnibus polling only, August 2025 to September 2026



Burnham's personal popularity is not yet detoxifying Labour, especially with Red Wall segments

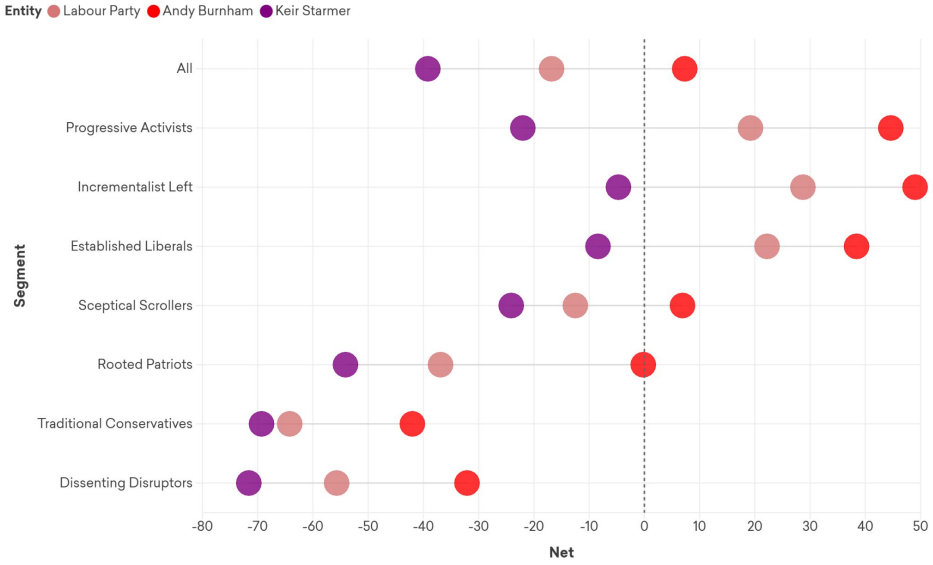
Andy Burnham is seen positively by four of the seven segments, neutrally by one and negatively by two. **His overall net favourability rating (+7) is well above the Labour Party's (-17), and far higher than that of his predecessor, Keir Starmer (-39).**

The gap between Burnham's personal favourability and the party's is widest among Rooted Patriots. This group is evenly split on Burnham (net 0), but the Labour brand remains deeply negative (-37), with 39 per cent viewing the party very negatively.

For many progressives, Labour's reputational problem appears to have eased with Keir Starmer's departure. **But among some Red Wall voters, the toxicity of the Labour brand has proved harder to shake off.**

Burnham consistently outperforms both his party and his predecessor

Net favourability by segment: Labour Party, Andy Burnham, Keir Starmer



Source: More in Common • September 2026

Labour is winning over previously undecided voters

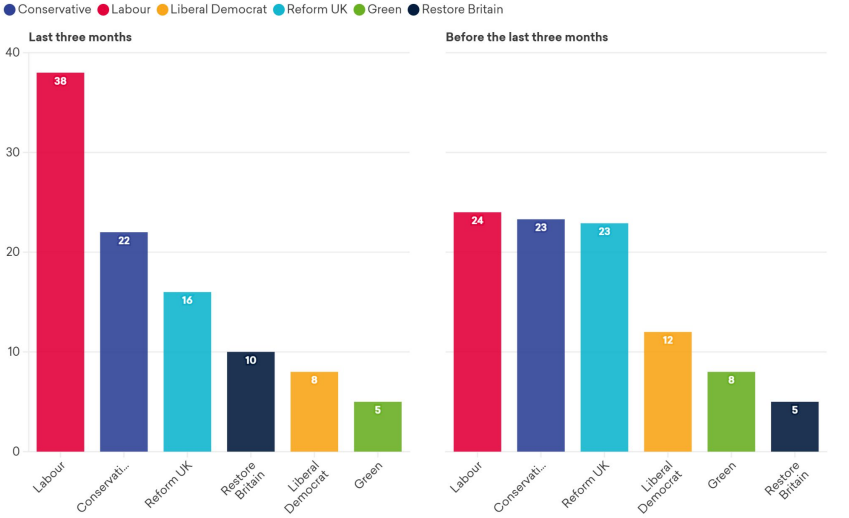
There is some evidence that Burnham's early efforts have begun to persuade some undecided voters to return to the fold.

16 per cent of the public reported making up their mind on who to vote for in the last three months. Of these voters, Labour has a clear lead- 38 per cent break for Labour, compared to 22 per cent for the Conservatives, 16 per cent for Reform and 10 per cent for Restore.

The voters that recently decided to vote Labour like what they see on the cost of living from Burnham. 41 per cent cite cost of living policies as the reason they are now intending to vote for the party, nearly double that of Labour voters as a whole. Andy Burnham personally is also a factor, with 38 per cent of these voters citing their like of him as a key reason.

Labour has been leading decisively among the voters who have made up their minds in the last three months

When did you decide to vote for the party that you are currently intending to vote for?



Source: More in Common • September 2026

What’s driving the Burnham bounce?

Andy Burnham is the most visible party leader

In his first week as Prime Minister, Andy Burnham achieved a remarkable level of cut-through: more than a third of Britons (36 per cent) heard from him that week.

By mid-September, that had dropped to 22 per cent – although still higher than any other party leader. Among Britons under the age of 35, more than a third had seen Burnham online.

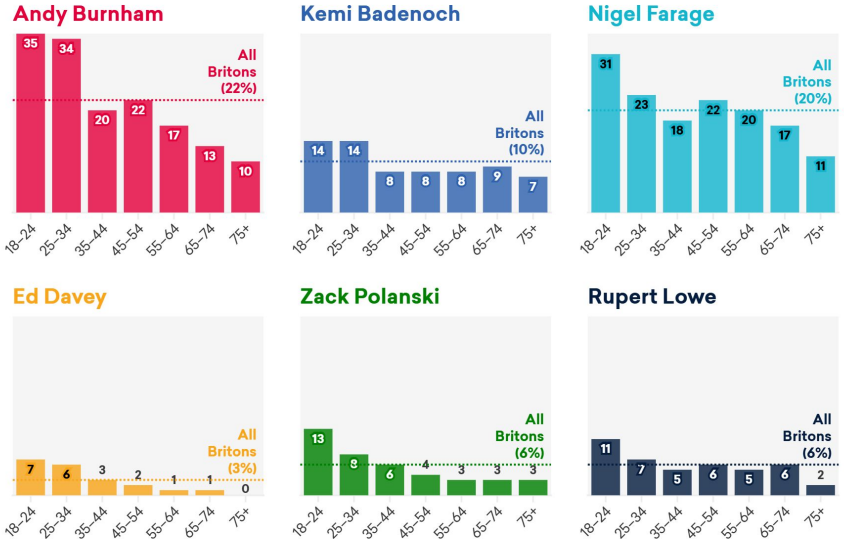
I think he's really visible. I don't know whether what he says he's doing is actually something that he is doing or is going to do or is going to be successful, but ***he's definitely very visible because every time I open some social media, he seems to pop up, whether he is being serious or doing one of his kind of, I'm one of the geezers, one of the lads type videos, but he's everywhere.*** *So that's a big change for me.*

Hannah, police security adviser, Bermondsey

22 per cent of Britons have seen Burnham on social media last week; 20 per cent saw Nigel Farage

In the past week, which of these political figures have you seen content from on social media?

(By age)



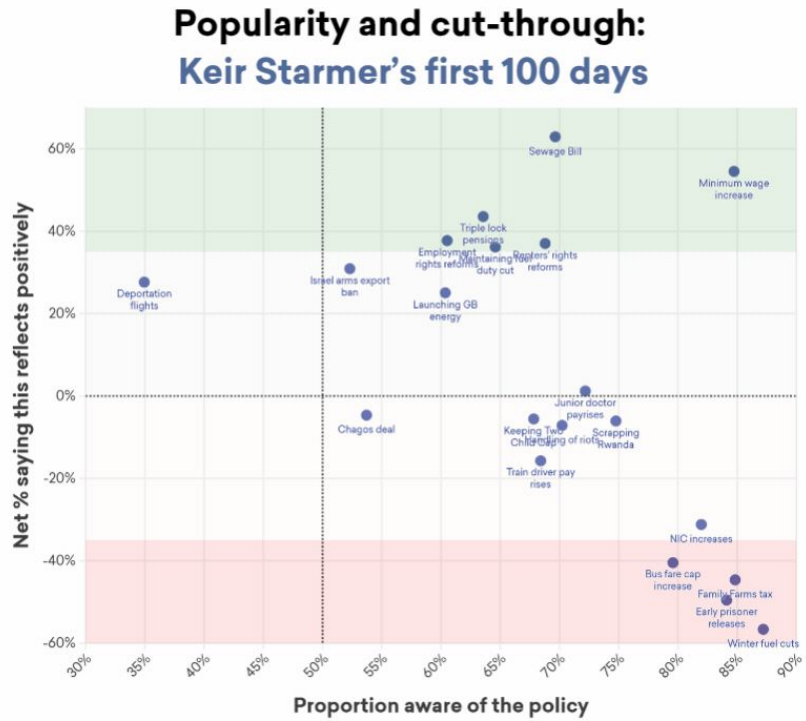
Source: More in Common • September 11-15 2026

Burnham's opening salvo has been highly popular

Keir Starmer's first 100 days in office were marked by a series of unpopular policies – and the most toxic policies were also the most well-publicised. For example the decision to means-test the Winter Fuel Allowance was the most unpopular and most widely known policy among the public, and became the 'original sin' that defined the Starmer government to the public for the rest of his premiership.

Andy Burnham's first two months have looked markedly different. His initial set of policies – a barrage of cost of living interventions – were highly popular, and people have heard about them. **Most well-known was the £2 bus fare cap**, which more than four in five Britons had heard something about.

If there is a danger zone for Andy Burnham's government, it surrounds the continuation of the prisoners' early release scheme – the only firmly negative policy tested.



Burnham has demonstrated that he *gets it*

Asked to choose Andy Burnham's greatest strengths, Britons most often say he **communicates well** (19 per cent) **and is in touch with ordinary people** (17 per cent). Among those who voted Labour in 2024, being in touch with ordinary people comes top (26 per cent).

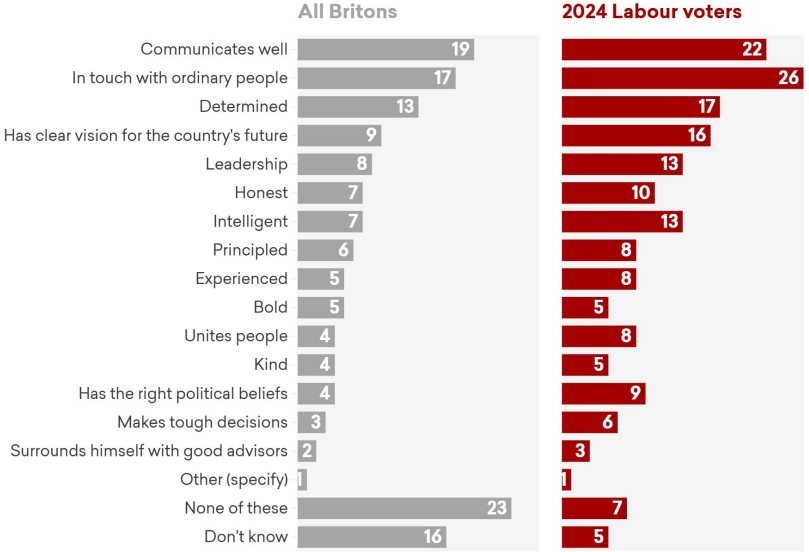
He has also focused on the issue the public care about most. The cost of living is the top test Britons will judge this government on (58 per cent), and his early cost of living measures cut through – more than four in five Britons had heard of the £2 bus fare cap.

> *He's not been one of those mayors what says and doesn't deliver. He's delivered. (...) And he's genuine. You can relate to him. He's been in our shoes. He's grown up, he was born in Liverpool. He's grown up in a working class family. So I think there's a lot to relate to him. Whether he's going to deliver or not, that's another question.*
>
> **Yasmin, housing officer, Manchester**

> *When he was mayor in Manchester, I quite liked him. I thought he was quite for working class people, if you can put it that way. Compared to other politicians, he did seem quite normal.*
>
> **Harley, events project manager, Nuneaton**

Britons believe Burnham's greatest strengths are communicating well and being in touch with ordinary people

When you think about Andy Burnham, which of the following do you think are his greatest strengths? Select up to two.



For many, the key difference between Burnham and Starmer is one of *trying*

Beyond policy, Britons also describe a sense that Andy Burnham is *trying* – that he actively wants to improve things for the public, in a way that many doubted in Keir Starmer.

Asked to describe him in a word or two, "trying" is one of the most common answers Britons give, alongside "good", "useless" and "don't know".

Because he was a man that said, 'I'm going to do this in the first week,' and then he did things, I want to say that's a step in the right direction, but I don't know.

Sam, prop maker, Sheffield

"Yeah, I think he's got some more ideas about how to help people more, hasn't he? He's come up with more things, the bus fares, the VAT for the entertainment and things like that. I think it's a good idea."

Kim, IT, Solihull

In a word or two, how would you describe Andy Burnham?

"Yeah, I think he's got some more ideas about how to help people more, hasn't he? He's come up with more things, the bus fares, the VAT for the entertainment and things like that. I think it's a good idea."

Kim, IT, Solihull

But some consider Burnham a 'people pleaser' – and have doubts about his vision for the country

Asked to choose what holds Andy Burnham back the most, Britons most often say he is **a people pleaser** (18 per cent) or **has no clear vision for the country's future** (13 per cent). Among Labour defectors (those who voted Labour in 2024 but have since moved elsewhere), these rise to 23 and 18 per cent.

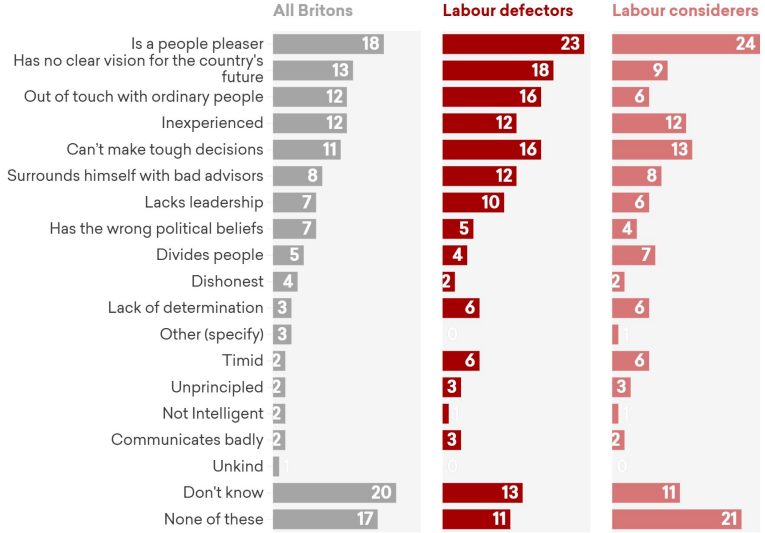
Some also have doubts about his decision-making. Around one in ten say inexperience is a key weakness (12 per cent) or that he can't make tough decisions (11 per cent), rising to 16 per cent of Labour defectors. But notably, just 4 per cent call him dishonest.

His speech was nice... but I think putting those things actually into practice is the hard part... Is it just the speech to get us all on his side? What is he actually going to do?"

Rachel, operations executive, Holborn and St Pancras

Britons believe Burnham's greatest weaknesses are being a people pleaser and lack of vision for the country's future

When you think about Andy Burnham, which of the following do you think holds him back the most? Select up to two.



But Burnham still needs to pass the "can" test

While Andy Burnham has proven to many Britons that he *gets it* and is *trying* to fix a country that feels broken, doubts remain over whether he *can*.

Most Britons (53 per cent) say Andy Burnham is likeable, but they are 9 points less likely (44 per cent) to say he is competent, and 42 per cent say he is in control. So while Burnham performs better on likeability than confidence, Kemi Badenoch performs better on competence than likability.

Yeah, I think he's got some more ideas about how to help people more, hasn't he? He's come up with more things, the bus fares, the VAT for the entertainment and things like that. I think it's a good idea.

Kim, IT, Solihull

Britons are more likely to say Burnham is *likeable* than *competent* or *in control*

Thinking about [leader name], do you think he/she is...

Net score (e.g. In control - not in control)

2

Labour's new voter coalition

Labour and the Seven Segments

Progressive Activists (12% of the population, 17% of Labour voters)

Why vote Labour?

- The party needs more time to fix the problems they inherited (36 per cent)
- To stop Reform from winning where I live (30 per cent)
- I like Andy Burnham (28 per cent)

Why <u>not</u> vote Labour?

- Labour has not done enough to reduce the cost of living (25 per cent)
- The party does not support Palestine enough (18 per cent)
- They haven't been able to deliver on their promises (17 per cent)

How they will judge Labour (*below cost of living and NHS*)

- How much they lower the cost of living (60 per cent)
- How much they reduce NHS waiting lists (47 per cent)
- Whether we have a closer relationship with the European Union (29 per cent)

I felt massively betrayed by Labour after the last general election. *And I kind of could see it coming. The kind of shift more away from the left (...) I was a big Jeremy Corbyn fan, and I think with his massive defeat, it kind of scared Labour and pushed them too far away from there, which is where I like to be. (...). And so then that's obviously the position that the Greens have kind of taken (...) I probably would've gone more Green by now if it wasn't for the fact that I knew that Andy Burnham was coming in. So now it's almost like for me,* ***it's not Labour versus Green. It's Green versus Andy is how I see it.***

Peter, videography student, Manchester

Incrementalist Left (21% of the population, 36% of Labour voters)

Why vote Labour?

- They are the most competent party (34 per cent)
- The party needs more time to fix the problems they inherited (31 per cent)
- I like Andy Burnham (30 per cent)

Why <u>not</u> vote Labour?

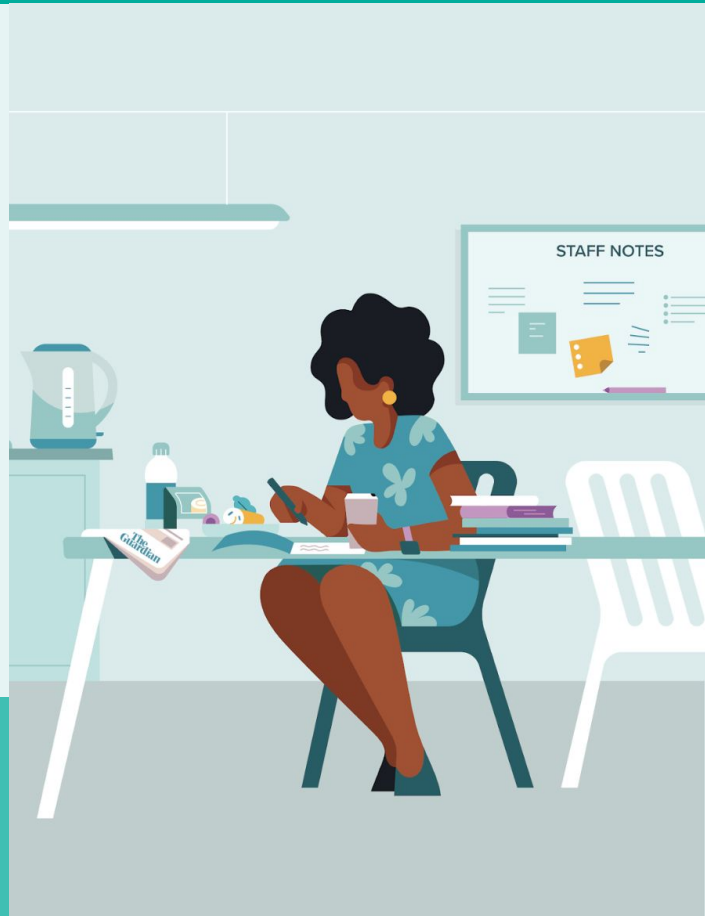
- Labour has not done enough to reduce the cost of living (27 per cent)
- They haven't been able to deliver on their promises (17 per cent)
- They haven't done anything differently from the previous Conservative government (14 per cent)

How they will judge Labour

- How much they lower the cost of living (60 per cent)
- How much they reduce NHS waiting lists (47 per cent)
- Whether they have improved jobs and opportunities for young people (27 per cent)

(Starmer) just wasn't the strong enough person, unfortunately, to be in that role, and I'm hoping Andy Burnham is, but I don't know. (...) He has only just got in, so I kind of think give him a bit of time maybe to see... Has he got a different approach? Hopefully. He seems like he potentially might.

Nadia, teaching assistant, Holborn and St Pancras



Established Liberals (9% of the population, 13% of Labour Voters)

Why vote Labour?

- The party is doing well in Government (31 per cent)
- I like Andy Burnham (30 per cent)
- The party's policies on the NHS and public services (28 per cent)

Why not vote Labour?

- Labour has not done enough to reduce the cost of living (21 per cent)
- Labour can't be trusted with tax (19 per cent)
- Labour can't be trusted with economic growth (18 per cent)

How they will judge Labour

- How much they lower the cost of living (60 per cent)
- How much they reduce NHS waiting lists (42 per cent)
- Whether they have improved jobs and opportunities for young people (29 per cent)

I think the Starmer administration just had terrible communication. It was just ridiculous. And I think the sense of coming out with something and then now changing your mind again, it just looked like it could never be consistent.

Temi, doctor, Bermondsey

Rooted Patriots (20% of the population, 12% of Labour voters)

Why vote Labour?

- I like Andy Burnham (45 per cent)
- The party needs more time to fix the problems they inherited (39 per cent)
- I've always voted Labour (23 per cent)

Why not vote Labour?

- Labour has not done enough to reduce the cost of living (36 per cent)
- Labour can't be trusted to control immigration (35 per cent)
- They haven't been able to deliver on their promises (25 per cent)

How they will judge Labour

- How much they reduce the cost of living (63 per cent)
- How much they lower immigration (47 per cent)
- How much they reduce NHS waiting lists (39 per cent)

People are thinking, what have we got to lose by voting for something different to Labour and Conservative? *What have we got to lose? I think there's a lot of people leaning towards Reform thinking,* ***how could it be any worse?***

Paul, retired, Nuneaton

Labour's coalition has different priorities, but is united on cost of living and NHS

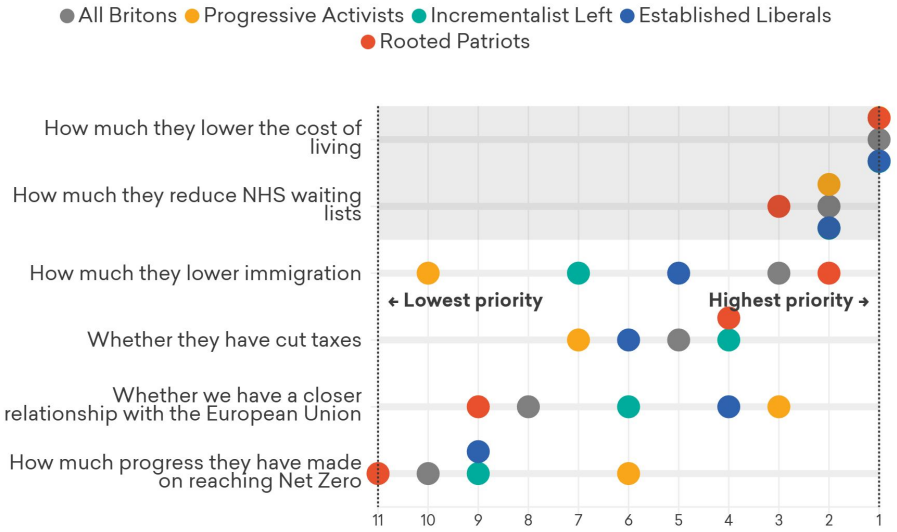
A key challenge for Burnham's government is that Labour's target segments diverge dramatically in how they will judge this government.

For Rooted Patriots, **lowering immigration** is their second top test for Burnham; for Progressive Activists, it ranks 10th on their list. Meanwhile Net Zero is a middle priority test among Labour's left flank, but far less salient to 'Red Wall' Rooted Patriots.

The two priorities that unite Labour's coalition are the NHS and cost of living. Across each of Labour's target segments – and the British public as a whole – reducing waiting lists and lowering the cost of living rank in the top three tests for this government's success.

Labour's target segments have varying priorities for this government - but all put NHS and cost of living in their top 3

Which of the following will be most important to you in judging the success of this Labour Government? Select up to three.



Source: More in Common, September 2026

For progressive voters, the anti-Reform vote is a key driver

Britain's Progressive voters *oppose* Reform UK more strongly than they *support* Labour or the Green Party.

The Greens are actually significantly more popular with Progressive Activists than Labour - but negative sentiment toward Reform is stronger than positive sentiment toward any left-wing party.

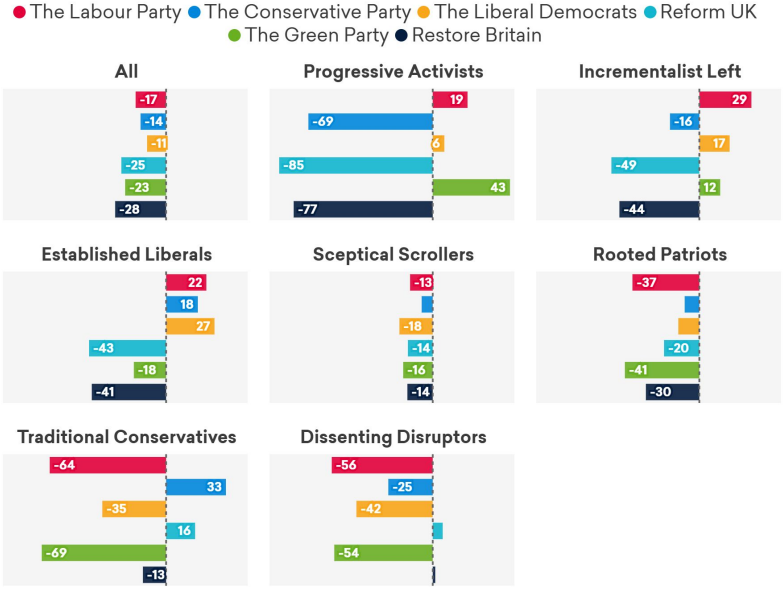
Even among Labour supporters, negative feeling towards Reform are stronger than positive feelings towards the party. 44 per cent of Labour supporters view the party very favourably, and 63 per cent view Reform very unfavourably.

This raises a potential challenge for the Labour Party: if a key driver of their vote is anti-Reform sentiment among progressives, it could de-risk the Green Party if the Conservatives become a viable opposition again. **In other words, Labour cannot afford to rely on the anti-Reform vote.**

Dislike of Reform is stronger among progressives than positive feelings towards Labour

In general do you have a positive or negative view of each of the following parties?

Net favourability, by segment



More in Common

Source: More in Common • September 2026

More in Common

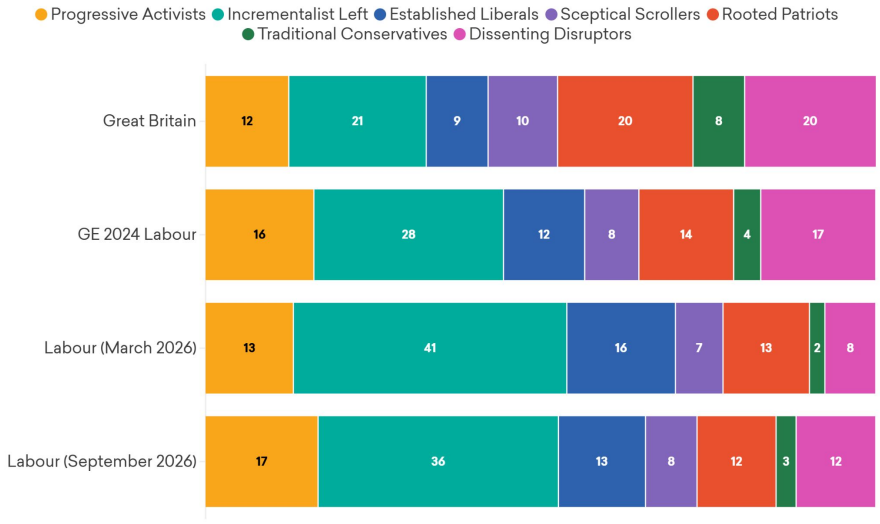
Under Starmer, Labour's support has become more concentrated among pro-institutionalist segments; Burnham has made it broader

In 2024, Labour, in part, won so many seats because it support was diffuse across areas of the country. Its vote share ticked up with right leaning segments, and declined with the left, resulting in a highly efficient coalition.

Keir Starmer's unpopularity among those unhappy with the status quos reduced the number of Rooted Patriots and Dissenting Disruptors in the Labour tent, and increased establishment-friendly segments (Incrementalist Left and Established Liberals). In March 2026, these two made up 57 percent.

That has now dropped to 49 per cent, with recoveries made in other segments. However, Labour is still significantly more ideologically concentrated on the centre-left than at the time of the last election.

Labour support in 2026 is more concentrated among the Incrementalist Left- but Burnham is beginning to broaden it



More in Common

Source: More in Common • September 2026

Labour’s coalition – demographics

Labour's lead among "hipsters" remains strong

Despite David Lammy's admission that he risked losing his Tottenham seat to "hipsters" moving to the area and voting Green, **self-described hipsters are actually one of Labour's strongest constituencies.**

If only those who call themselves hipsters could vote in a general election, Labour would win in a landslide with 47 per cent of the vote.

However, Labour's support among hipsters has dropped since the General Election, from 55 per cent of the vote to 47 per cent, while the Greens have made gains, from 8 per cent to 13 per cent.

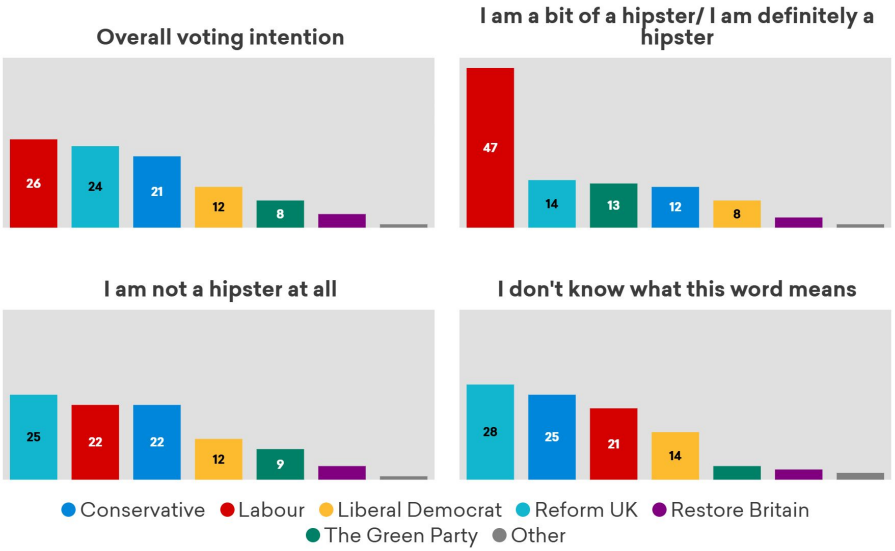
If hipsters are a key battleground in the Battle for the Left, Labour's advantage currently remains strong under Burnham.

However, among those who say they are 'not a hipster at all', Labour's vote share drops to 22 per cent, and 21 per cent among those who don't know what the term means.

Labour leads with 47 per cent of the vote among self-described hipsters

To what extent, if at all, would you describe yourself as a 'hipster'?

(Headline voting intention)



Labour performs better with young voters – but the competition with the Greens is tight

Those under the age of 35 stand out as the only cohort who have a net positive view of Labour, although it's a narrow margin: 42 per cent view the Labour Party positively and 32 per cent negatively, compared with 30 per cent and 47 per cent across the country as a whole.

Two in five (41 per cent) say Burnham has performed better than they expected as Prime Minister, compared with 29 per cent of the public overall.

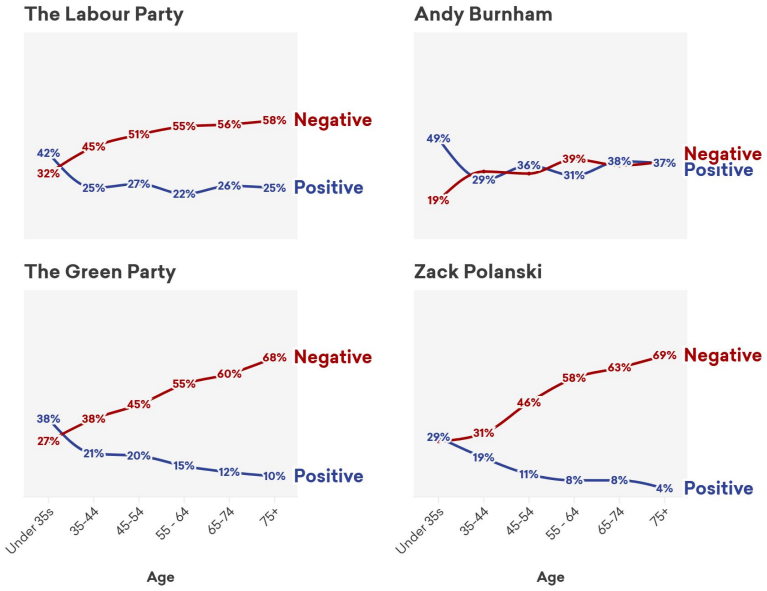
But the Greens are almost as popular as Labour with young Britons. 38 per cent of under 35s view the Green Party positively, compared with 22 per cent of the public overall. And among those younger than 25, the Greens' popularity rises further: 45 per cent of those aged 18-24 have a positive view of the Green Party, compared to only 21 per cent who view them negatively.

I personally find it refreshing to listen to politicians from the Green Party who speak authentically and don't use this political double speak that's just designed to distract and confuse people.

Archie, primary school teacher, Brighton

Young Britons have the most positive views of Labour, Burnham, the Greens and Polanski

In general do you have a positive or negative view of each of the following parties/individuals?



Labour – The Party of the Rich?

For most of British electoral history, Labour firmly won those on lower incomes in society.

Exit polling in 2024 suggested that for the first time, Labour did about as well with the richest voters as with the poorest. Since the general election, this has become even more stark.

As politics increasingly polarises around formal education, immigration and the cost of living, Labour support has hit 42 per cent with those earning more than 100,000, but is polling at just 24 per cent with those earning less than £25k.

The squeeze comes from both directions at once. Low income voters – those often most exposed to the cost of living – have moved fastest to the anti-system parties, with Restore and the Greens pulling from the left and Reform from the right, leaving Labour and the Conservatives increasingly reliant on higher earners.

Labour are now strongest among those on the highest incomes

Vote share by party, average since September 2026

More in Common

More in Common • September 2026

Challenges facing Labour’s growth

More in Common

In May 2026, Labour lost votes to both the left and right in wards with higher deprivation

In May 2026, Labour lost the most ground in deprived areas, and its vote held up the best in areas with lower deprivation.

In the least deprived 10 per cent of wards, Labour's vote fell by 10 points, Reform rose by 16, and the Greens rose by three..

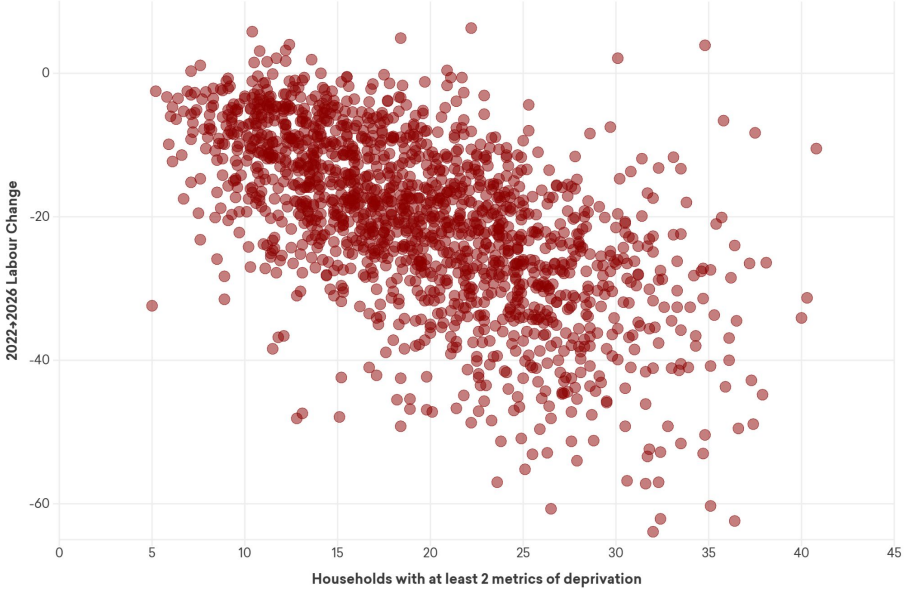
In the most deprived 10 per cent of wards, Labour's vote fell by 34 points, Reform UK rose by 25, and the Greens rose by 10.

Labour's losses were steepest in areas with the highest proportion of blue collar workers, and mildest where there were more white collar workers and graduates.

Different as the two are, Labour's losses to the Greens and to Reform were both driven by this divide, and by falling support in places struggling with the cost of living and the headwinds of rapid economic change.

Labour's losses were far worse in areas with high deprivation

Local elections, ward level where available, 2026, change from 2022



More in Common

Source: Office for National Statistics, Elections Maps UK Ward Results

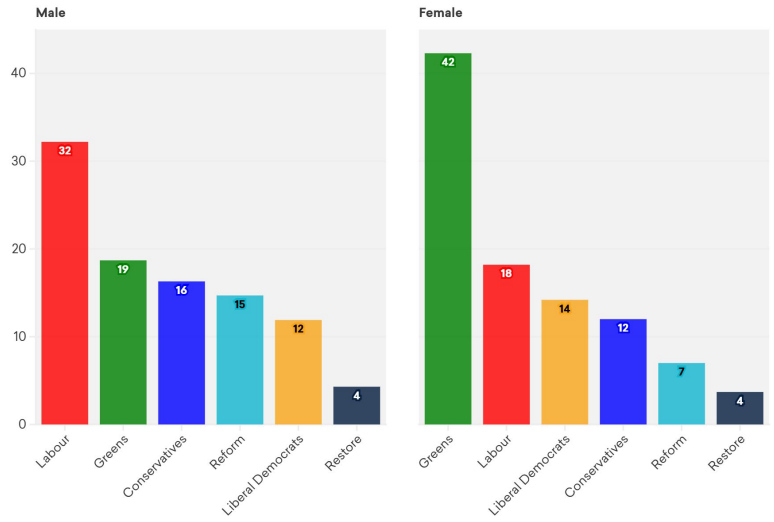
Labour has not yet seen off the Green threat with young voters

While the Green Party's performance in the polls has dropped off since Andy Burnham's appointment as Prime Minister, with Labour appearing to be the main beneficiary, there are signs of continued weakness among young Britons aged 18-24. Even now, the Greens are marginally leading Labour among this age group, by 30 per cent to 25 per cent in this group. The Green surge is pronounced among women,, where the Greens currently lead women aged 18-24 by 24 points, while Labour leads among men of the same age by 14 points. Reform wins almost twice the among of support with young men (15 per cent) as young women (7 per cent).

Young people are also particularly worried about jobs, with 41 per cent of Gen Z naming Jobs and Employment as a top issue facing them. Only 18 per cent of this group think the government is handling the issue of jobs and employment well, compared to 56 percent who think they are doing badly. They also name the cost of living as their top barrier to voting Labour.

Men aged 18-24 lean more towards Labour, and women aged 18-24 lean more towards the Greens

September 2026 average



Source: More in Common • September 2026

Labour's reputation as the party of the working class is eroding with younger voters

For most of British electoral history, Labour was firmly established as the party of the working class and its association with the trade union movement.

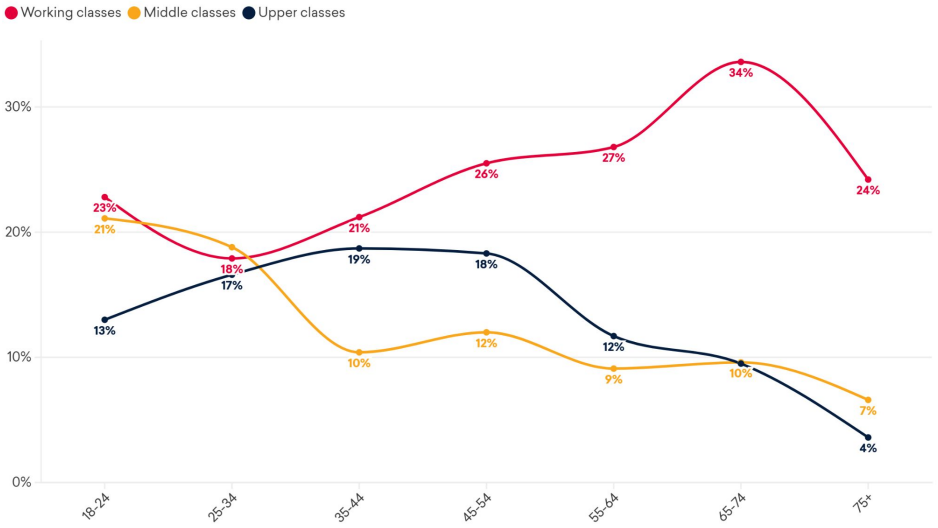
This reputation is beginning to fade among younger voters. 34 per cent of Gen Z see Labour as representing the middle or upper classes, compared to 21 per cent who see it representing the working class. Older voters are still much more likely to see Labour as the party of the working class.

This may be driving the Green surge since 2024 in areas with high proportions of young people struggling with the cost of living and housing. 56 per cent of Green voters see Labour as representing the upper or middle classes, compared to just 22 per cent who said it represented the working class.

Younger people are far more likely to see Labour as a middle-class party

Who from the following, if anyone, do you think the Labour Party represent? Please select up to three.

Working classes, middle classes and upper classes only



Source: More in Common • September 2026

3

What voters want to see from Labour

The Government still needs to win back public trust on the issues that matter most

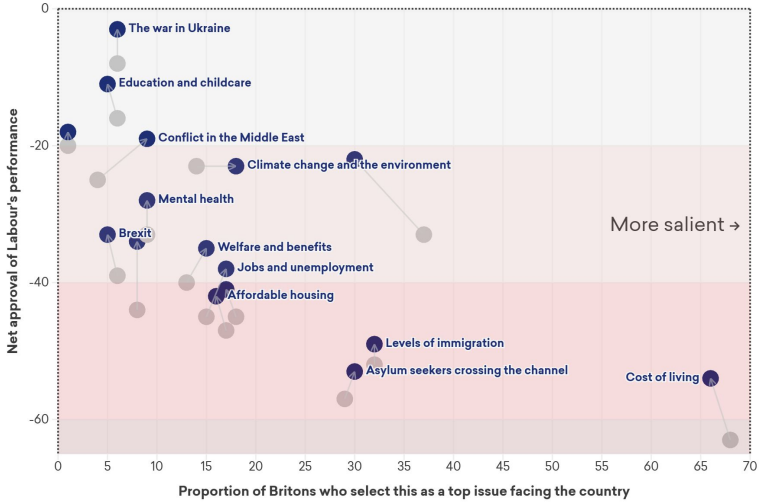
The government's approval rating on most issues have marginally improved, but the public still lack trust in the government to deliver – most severely on the issues Britons care most about.

Approval is lowest on cost of living, handling of channel crossings and immigration in general – three of the most salient issues for the public. The government's strongest issues are education and childcare (-8) and handling the war in Ukraine (-2), though even here, more people think it is doing a bad job than a good one.

The consistently negative sentiment towards government performance underlines that the same lack of trust in the government to improve lives that drove the populist surge in 2024 to 2025 has not suddenly dissipated with a change of Prime Minister.

Few Britons believe the government is performing well on the most important issues

Net performance rating against issue salience. Arrows run from February 2026 to August 2026.



More in Common • February and August 2026

What is the 'Makerfield test'?

The Makerfield Test is the promise Andy Burnham put at the heart of his premiership: **to deliver for places like Makerfield that have felt forgotten by Westminster.**

In 11 focus groups in Makerfield, voters described how they want it to look in practice. They cited **action on the cost of living** and **tangible improvements to quality of life** - the Greater Manchester bus fare cap was cited unprompted as proof he can deliver.

Voters also said they want **place-based improvements and local championships** to be part of this, ensuring that the devolution reaches beyond Inner Manchester.

I'm already feeling the benefits of what he's done … having the bus fare reduced makes a massive difference. It saved me about 60 quid a month, just by him capping the bus fare - and I think everybody in whatever wage bracket you're in is feeling it."

Ella, Nurse, Highfield

I wanted someone who's going to help Makerfield who we can bother with potholes and small issues."

Alice, Associate Architect, Hindley Green

I think being present as a start, actually being present. Josh Simons was — I've only really known him in the last year or so, but he was very present from what I've heard. He was always around. He was here to talk and listen and respond back to people."

Alice, Associate Architect, Hindley Green

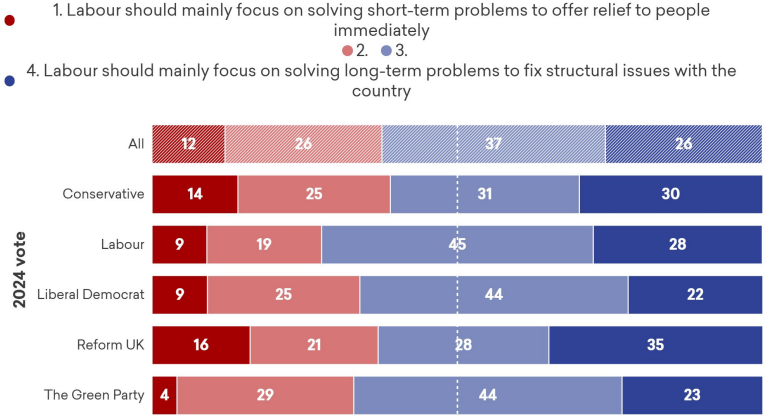
Britons want to combine immediate relief with a long-term plan

Since the 2024 General Election, the public's appetite for radical change has grown, while support for gradual change has fallen. In July 2024, 52 per cent of Britons favoured the government pursuing smaller, gradual change, versus the 38 per cent who wanted something more radical. By the time of Burnham's election as Labour leader in July 2026, this had flipped - 36 per cent favoured gradual change, versus 42 per cent who wanted something more radical.

This demand is evident in the desire for longer term, structural reform too - many think the country faces big problems which require big solutions, not sticking plasters. Almost two thirds (63 per cent) say Labour should mainly focus on solving long-term problems and fixing the country's structural issues, versus 37 per cent who prioritise immediate relief.

Most Britons believe that Labour should focus on fixing long-term problems rather than short-term relief

Please place yourself on a scale to 1 to 4 based on which statement comes closest to your view.



More in Common • September 2026

"I would tell him to set long-term goals but have some short-term relief... something that's tangible that can help immediately... just some help while you tell us what the plan long-term is."

Rachel, operations executive, Holborn and St Pancras

What policies could unite different groups?

Different policy ideas have the potential to either unite, or fragment, Labour's coalition.

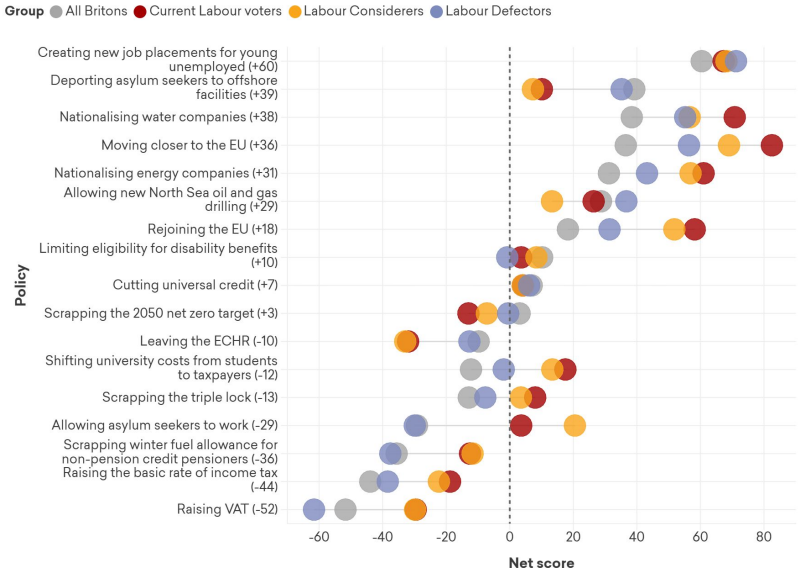
The most divisive policies among Labour's electorate revolve around immigration. All groups support deporting asylum seekers to offshore vote groups, but there is a 25 point gap between Labour 'defectors'– those who have left the party since 2024– and those considering Labour now. Similar gaps are also observed on the ECHR, drilling in the North Sea, and letting asylum seekers work, with defectors being consistently the most supportive of a hardline anti immigration stances, but those actively considering Labour, but not yet voting for them, the least.

Policies around water and energy nationalisation tend to be the most unifying in their coalition, attracting broad support between different Labour groups. Creating jobs to combat youth unemployment also tests well with all Labour groups and the general public.

Labour's coalition is united on some policies, but fragment on others

If the Labour Party adopted the following policies, would you say it would reflect positively or negatively on them?

Net saying positively



Source: More in Common • September 2026

The Government may be punished if they don't meet their ambitious targets

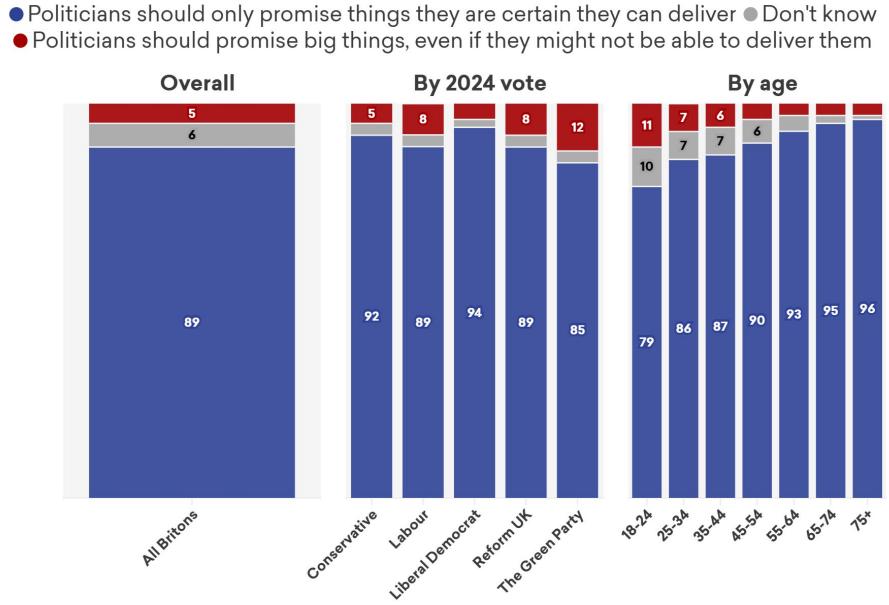
Some of Burnham's most ambitious policy pledges face widespread public scepticism: Just 15 per cent of Britons think Burnham's target to end rough sleeping by Christmas is achievable by this government; and only 25 per cent think it's likely the government will succeed in stopping illegal dumping.

The Government's challenge is balancing the public's appetite for bold, ambitious targets with their scepticism that the government can actually deliver them.

But succeed on either – a Christmas without rough sleeping, or Britain's illegal dumps finally cleared – and it would defy public expectations, demonstrate the kind of 'politics of can' that the public is desperate to see, and prove that government can actually deliver on the issues that, for many, typify that sense of 'Broken Britain' and inability of government to deliver.

Across age and politics, Britons say that politicians should only make promises they are certain they can deliver

Which of the following comes closest to your view?



Source: More in Common • August 2026

More in Common

There's been a vibe shift, but now the public wants substance

Andy Burnham's first weeks as Prime Minister have been met with cautious optimism. Crucially, many are at least willing to give him a hearing, a necessary first step if Labour is to win back its 2024 coalition.

But the public now wants substance. On most issues, more people are unclear than clear about where Burnham stands, with devolution is the only exception. Some also suspect he is simply telling them what they want to hear, without much detail - among those who voted Labour in 2024 but have since moved elsewhere or are now undecided, his greatest perceived weaknesses are being a people pleaser (25 per cent) and lacking a clear vision for the country (18 per cent).

A key driver of Starmer's slide in popularity after July 2024 was that the public did not know what he stood for or what his priorities were. If Burnham wants to keep the public listening, he must avoid the same trap.

Whereas I'd say Andy Burnham, there's at least a bit more vision, a bit more presence, and that I welcome... it's nice to have someone leading the country who's a bit more visible and present.

Ross, contractor, Southwark

I think he's doing lots of things that people will think, oh, this all sounds brilliant. I'm a bit concerned as to where all the money's coming from... But it's early days, and as with all of them, we'll give them all a chance, don't we, until we have enough and jump over somewhere else.

Lorna, dog groomer, Clacton

I think [Keir Starmer] fell into the trap of talking like a politician and never really said anything straight. He went around the houses with what he was saying and people don't [want] that.

Rich, IT manager, Manchester

Starmer hides behind a lectern with a sheaf of notes. And it's all prepared. The other fella stands in the middle of Downing Street. There's no lectern. He's not hiding.

Bernard, retired construction worker, Trafford

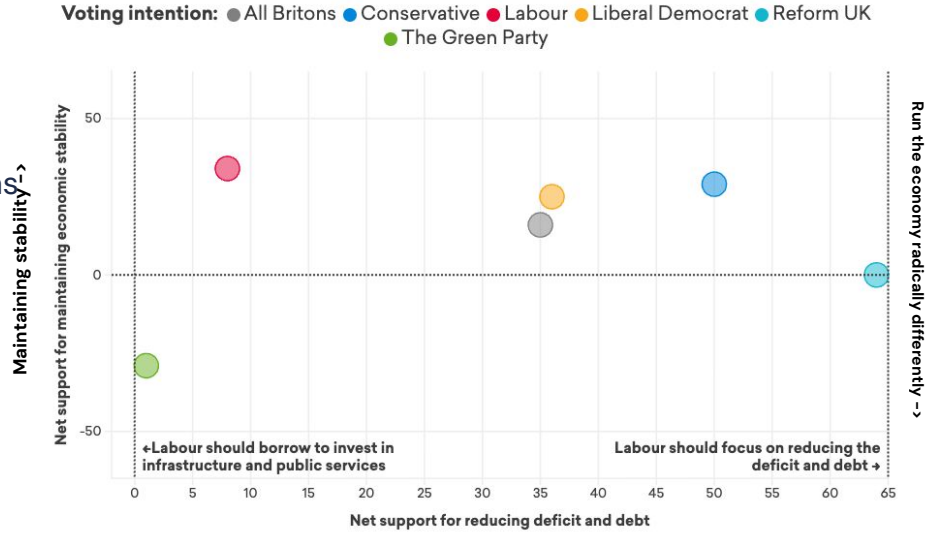
Britons want the Budget to combine bold action with fiscal responsibility

For those voters who have moved toward parties outside of the political mainstream, any action on the cost of living needs to be radical.

Yet a key challenge for the government in the upcoming Budget will be balancing this bold radicalism with the public's worry about fiscal risk and instability. The public as a whole would rather the government prioritise economic stability (58 per cent) over running the economy radically differently (42 per cent).

Similarly, 68 per cent of Britons (and 54 per cent of Labour's own voters) hold a preference for reducing the deficit over borrowing to invest.

Most Britons - and most Labour voters - think Labour should prioritise reducing the deficit and maintaining economic stability



Source: More in Common • September 2026

Labour will face pressure to clarify its migration policy...

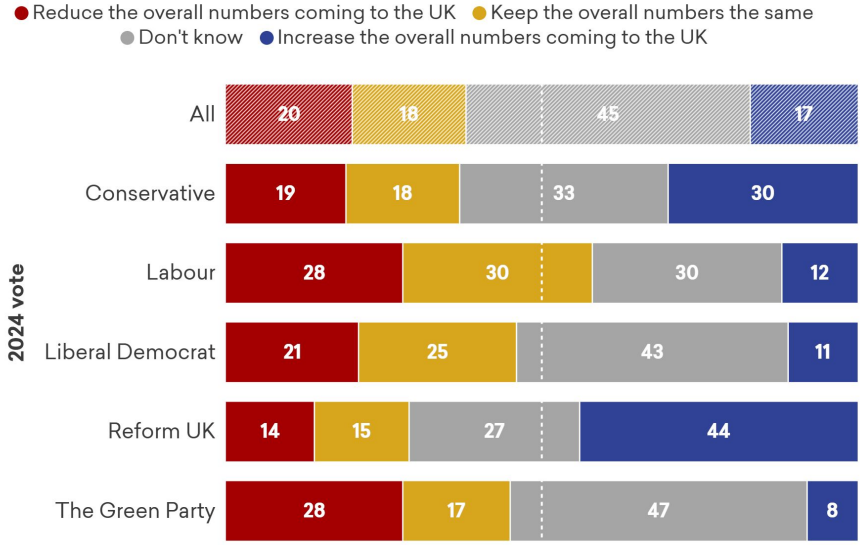
Most Britons are not yet sure where Burnham stands on migration. Immediately after he became Labour leader, just two in ten said they were clear, compared to 56 per cent who were not. Those who ventured a guess were split almost equally between thinking he wanted to increase, reduce or maintain numbers coming to the UK.

This uncertainty has to an extent benefitted Burnham so far – almost a quarter of Rooted Patriots, the 'Red Wall' voters many of whom Labour will hope to pull back from Reform UK, assumed he, like them, wanted to reduce net migration.

But ambiguity isn't a sustainable position. 48 per cent see migration and asylum as one of the top issues facing the country, rising to 68 per cent among these Rooted Patriots. Indeed, more than 65 per cent of Labour-Right switchers expect progress on reducing legal migration within a year, and almost half want to see progress on reducing small boat crossings by December.

Britons aren't sure about Andy Burnham's views on immigration

Based on what you've seen and heard, what would you say best represents Andy Burnham's sentiment toward immigration?



...and should not assume doing so will alienate progressives

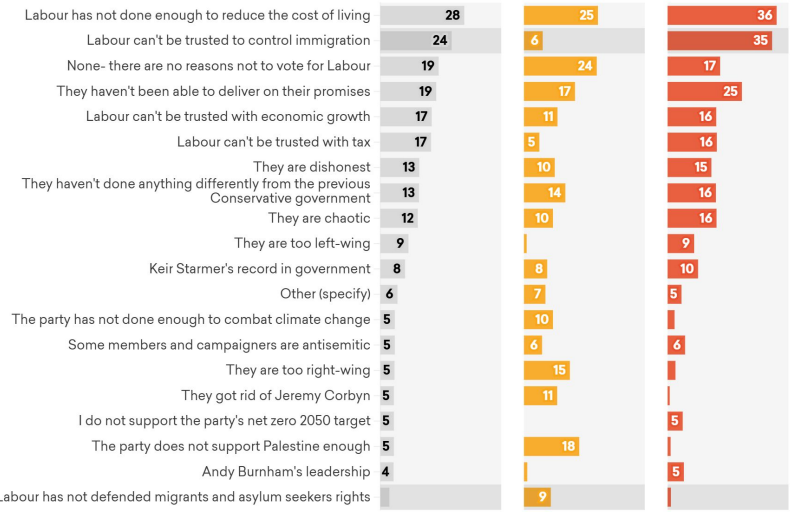
In focus groups, some of Labour's more progressive supporters voice unhappiness with the Starmer Government's migration and asylum policies, but the issue tends to matter less to them overall. Labour's handling of migration is the top reason Labour–Reform switchers give for leaving Labour (54 per cent), yet just 12 per cent of those who have moved from Labour to the Greens since 2024 cite dislike of Labour's migration policy. Onlly 9 per cent of Progressive Activists, the segment of most Green–Labour defector cite a lack of defence for migrants and asylum seekers as their main barrier to voting Labour.

By contrast, Rooted Patriots, the crucial 'Red Wall' group, are three times more likely to say a main barrier is that Labour cannot be trusted on migration.

In fact, even the most progressive voters believe action is needed on migration – 66 per cent of Green supporters are worried about levels of immigration, and this party group is divided over reforms like extending the qualifying period for ILR or making asylum status temporary, rather than outright opposed.

A third of Rooted Patriots cite failures to control immigration as a barrier to voting Labour; only 9 per cent of Progressive Activists cite failures to defend migrants' rights

Main reasons for not voting Labour, select up to three



More in Common • September 2026
Top 20 responses only

Britons want investment in defence, but are split on the tradeoff with public services

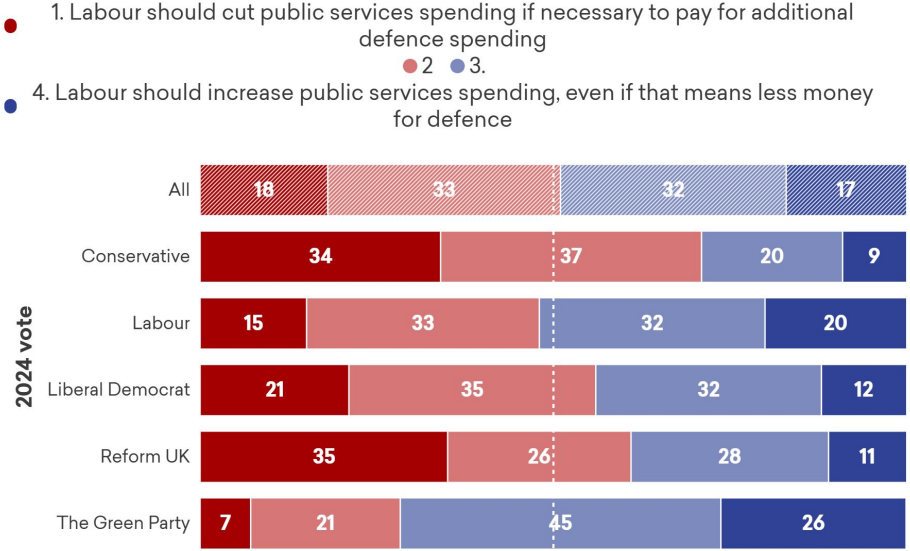
Andy Burnham's assertion that "national security can't come at the expense of social security" resonates with many Britons – and his own voters.

Britons across politics believe that defence spending should be increased, support the 3 per cent target, but are split on whether we should cut public services to this end.

Half (51 per cent) say we should cut public services spending to pay for defence if necessary; 49 per cent say we should increase public services spending, even if it meant less money for defence.

Britons are split on cutting public services to fund defence

Please place yourself on a scale to 1 to 4 based on which statement comes closest to your view.



Britons agree with the Prime Minister's diagnosis of regional inequality

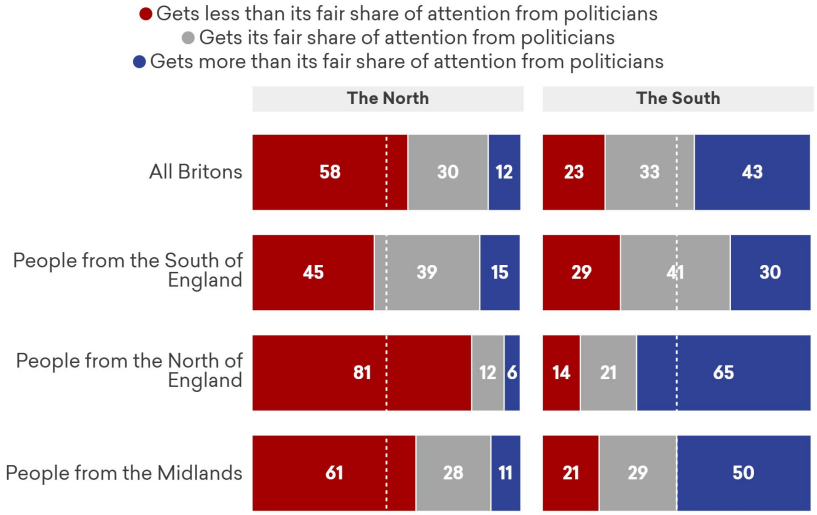
In his initial weeks as Prime Minister, Andy Burnham focused on the need to tackle the North-South divide. The public agree that regional inequality is an issue – three in five Britons think the North gets less than its fair share of attention from politicians, rising to 4 in 5 among those who live there.

Southerners also hold this view. 45 per cent of people from the South of England say the North is neglected in our politics, while they tend to say the South gets its fair share of attention.

People worry, however, that the government's approach risks 'taking' from one region to give to another. In focus groups in the South of England, participants are keen that the government aims to 'level the playing field' instead, stressing the South has its own issues with deprivation and poverty.

Northerners and southerners agree: the North gets neglected by politicians

Which of the following comes closest to your view overall?



4
Paths to 2029

Labour faces a two pronged assault from Greens and Reform

It is sometimes argued that Labour losses to Reform in May were driven, to a great degree, by vote splitting rather than genuine transfer to Reform. The reality is more mixed.

The Greens gains did worsen Labour's losses, rising by 9 points in seats Reform flipped. But Reform rose by 41, and Labour fell by 30, and across many wards in former 'Red Wall' areas, such as Greater Manchester and St Helens, vote switching from Labour to Reform en masse was in evidence. Reform were also helped by the dramatic squeezing of Conservative votes in these wards, from 27 to 10 per cent.

In wards Greens flipped, Reform registered at just 11 per cent. The Greens rose by 25 per cent in these wards, while Labour fell by 29 per cent.

Reform gains cannot purely be explained by Greens splitting the vote

Vote share by party, 2022 vs 2026 and the change, in wards Labour lost to Reform vs Green

More in Common

LE2022/LE2026 results

The Holborn and St Pancras Test

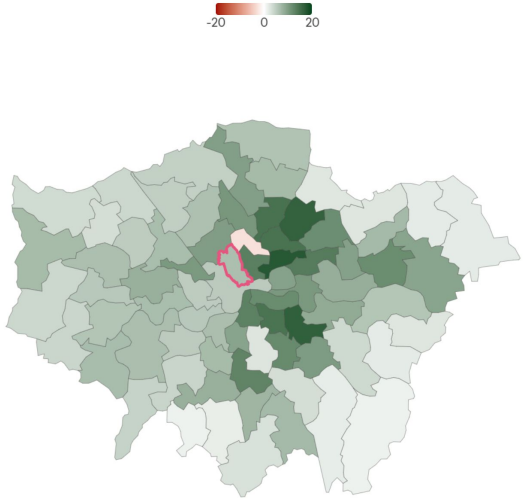
Labour performed relatively poorly in vote share in London in 2026, falling 5 points from their 2019 vote share, but well in terms of seats, winning 59 out of 75. In some seats, Labour vote share fell sharply.

Holborn and St Pancras was one of those seats. Labour's vote share declined by 17 points as an independent challenger gained steam. While Labour still won most wards in the locals there, the Greens surged to 29 per cent in the seat.

Burnham has demonstrated considerable success in Manchester in recent elections in reversing recent elections. If Labour can see off Polanski, it will suggest that Labour's gains against the Greens can be replicated outside the North. If Polanski wins, the threat of left wing fragmentation remains could cost Labour main seats from beyond the capital.

Even before Polanski, the Greens made substantial inroads across London

Change in vote share, Green Party, 2019 to 2024



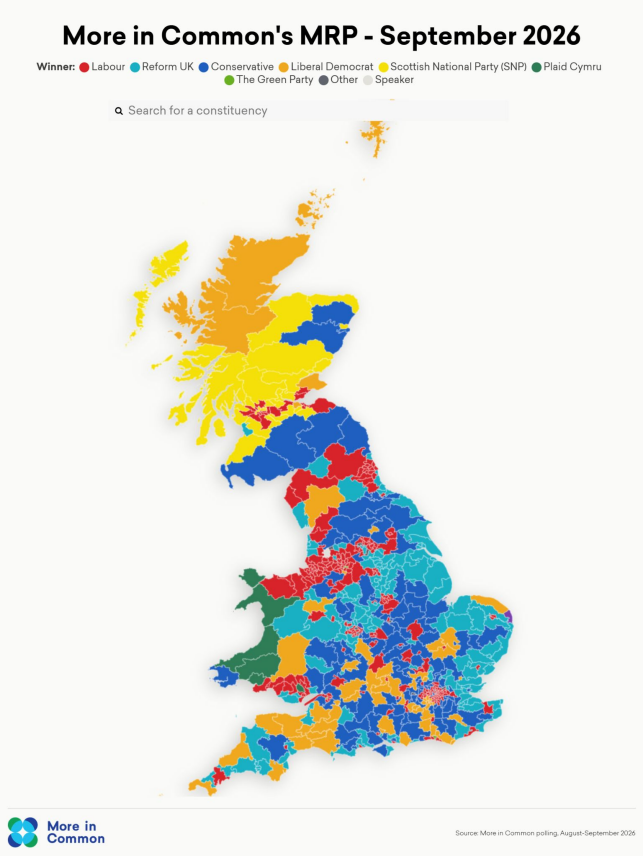
Source: House of Commons Library, Rallings and Thrasher

Labour estimated to win 250 seats in an election tomorrow

More in Common's MRP analysis shows that Labour's new lead in the poll has translated to a dramatic improvements at a seat level, but Labour would still be 76 short of an overall majority.

Labour would be estimated to win 250 seats, up 140 from the last MRP conducted under Starmer in July 2026. Reform are down to 147, and the Conservatives are up from July at 125. The Liberal Democrats are estimated to win 63 seats, meaning a Lib-Lab pact alone would not be enough to reach an overall majority.

Labour are estimated to win 26 per cent of the vote, Reform 24 per cent, the Conservatives 22 per cent, the Liberal Democrats 11 per cent, the Greens 8 per cent, and Restore Britain 3 per cent.

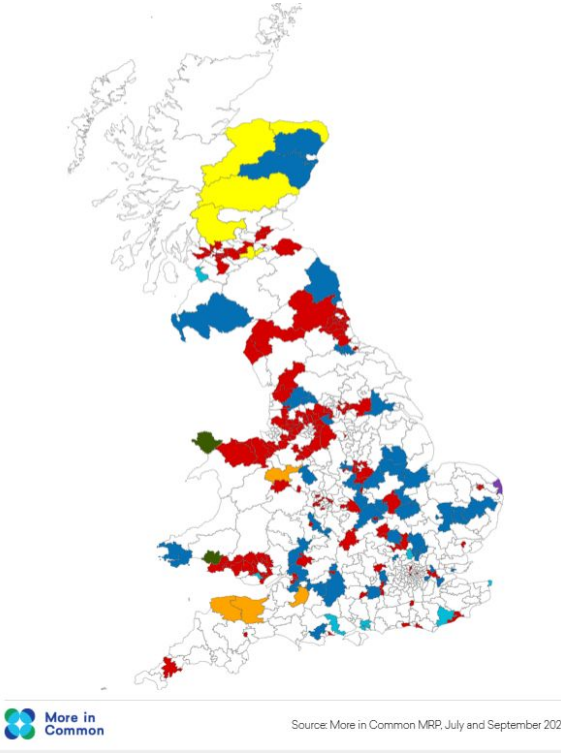


Labour fortunes have improved dramatically, but they remain well short of their 2024 result

At the end of Keir Starmer's premiership, Starmer was estimated to win just 110 seats, down 301 on the 2024 results- the worst single loss of seats for the party in its history. Reform were estimated to be at touching distance of a majority at 293.

Labour's fortunes have dramatically improved, despite a fairly modest five point vote share increase, gaining 143 seats and losing just three from our projections. 101 of these were from Reform, 14 from the SNP, and 13 from the Conservatives. These gains were disproportionately concentrated in the North West (+33), Wales (+16) and the North East (+14). Many of these seats are heavily working class seats that Labour lost badly in the May local elections.

Despite the improvement, this would still be the single largest loss of seats by Labour in a General Election since 1931, and their weakest vote share since 1918.



Labour's recovery is strongest outside of London

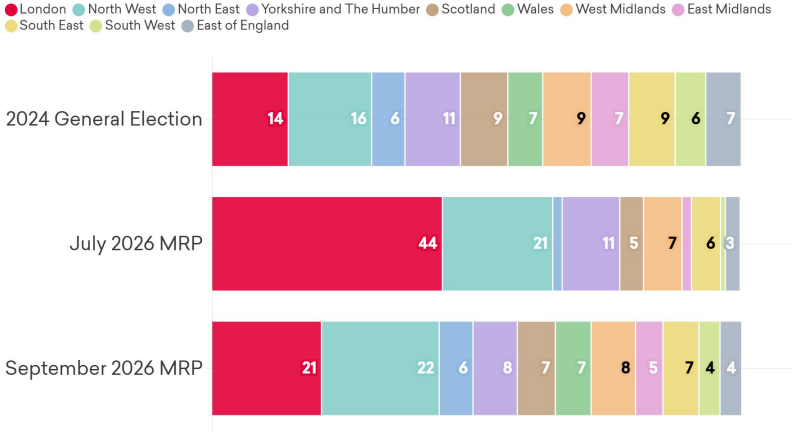
By the end of Keir Starmer's premiership, Labour's estimated seat count had become heavily concentrated in London, with 44 per cent of seats they were estimated to hold onto being in the capital.

Burnham has begun to reverse that that. Labour are now estimated to win more seats in the North West (55) than in London (53), and Labour has seen large improvements in the North East and North West. Labour's vote share is up 9 points in the North East, and 8 in the North West, from the latest MRP conducted in July.

Labour are still seeing losses in areas outside of London and the North West. Proportionally, the areas with the largest losses are in the East of England, going from 27 in 2024 to 10, and the South West, falling from 24 to 10. Labour are also estimated to lose over half of their seats from 2024 in the East Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber and Scotland.

In July, 44 per cent of Labour seats were projected to be in London; now, they are much more spread out

Share of Labour's total seats by region



Source: More in Common MRP; House of Commons Library

Labour's recovery is fragile

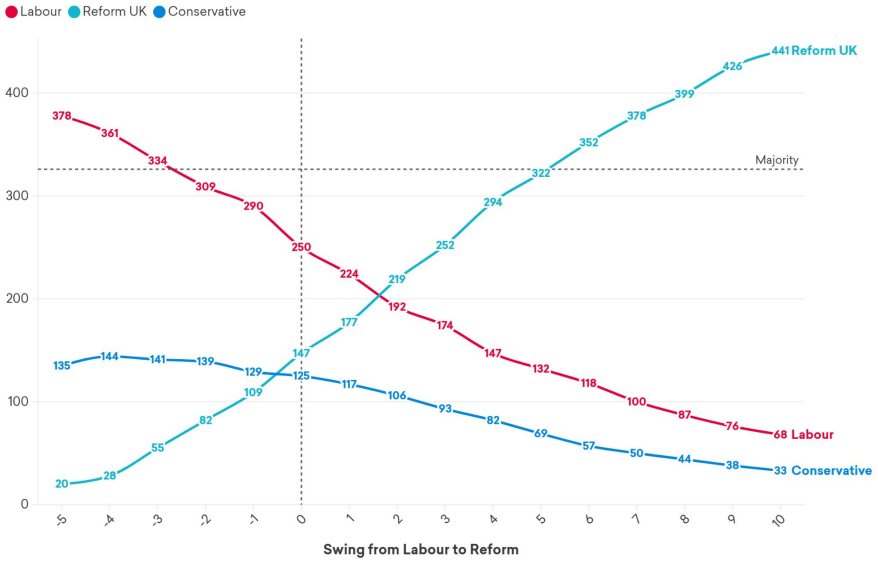
A staggering 48 per cent of seats in our September 2026 MRP were projected to have a margin of under 5 percentage points, up from 19 per cent in 2024. This inherently magnifies the importance of local dynamics, tactical voting, and makes overall results harder to predict. Any campaign would also become highly unpredictable with this unprecedented degree of fragmentation.

81 Labour seats are projected to be won by under 5 percentage points, and 20 by under one percentage point. This means that even a small slip from Burnham's polling bounce could begin to rapidly cost the party dozens of seats. Just a 2% swing away from Labour to Reform is needed for Reform to regain its status as the largest party, and 5% would see Reform with a majority.

Conversely, a further slippage in Reform's vote could easily see the Conservatives as Labour's main opponents, bringing its own set of challenges.

Labour's recovery is vulnerable to a Reform resurgence

Seats under uniform swing between Labour and Reform UK, applied to September MRP baseline



More in Common

Source: More in Common MRP, September 2026

Labour are squeezing the Green Party

The strength of Labour gains is a seat is tied to the speed of the Green decline since July.

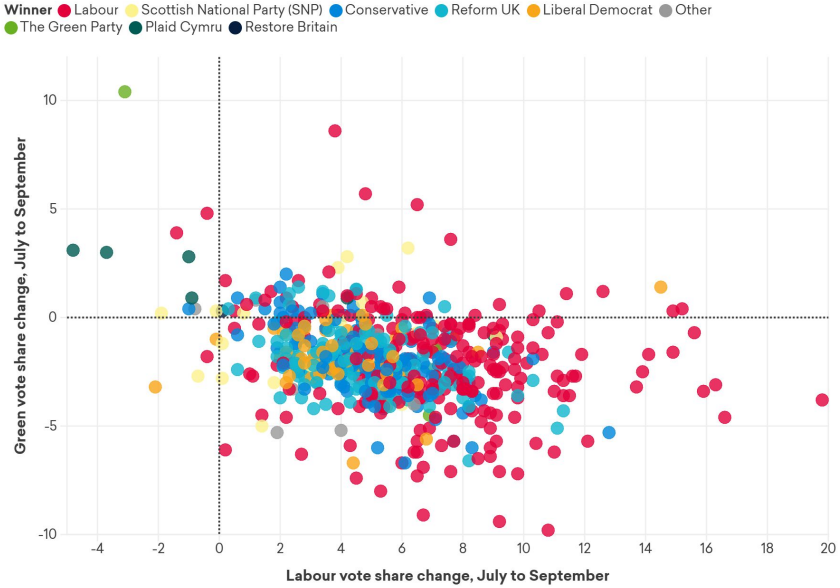
Overall, the Greens have fallen from 10 seats to 3. They are now projected to win Brighton Pavillion, Bristol Central and Gorton and Denton, losing Waveney Valley and North Hertfordshire to the Conservatives.

In 33 seats, the fall in the Green vote share is larger than Labour's margin over their nearest competitor, underlining the importance of the Green vote share for Labour.

However, the Greens remain in second place in 40 Labour seats- 21 of them in London. Progressive Activists, who consider voting Labour and the Green, still report many reservations about the party and their loyalties may change again.

Labour's gains come heavily at the Green's expense

Vote share change by constituency, July to September MRP



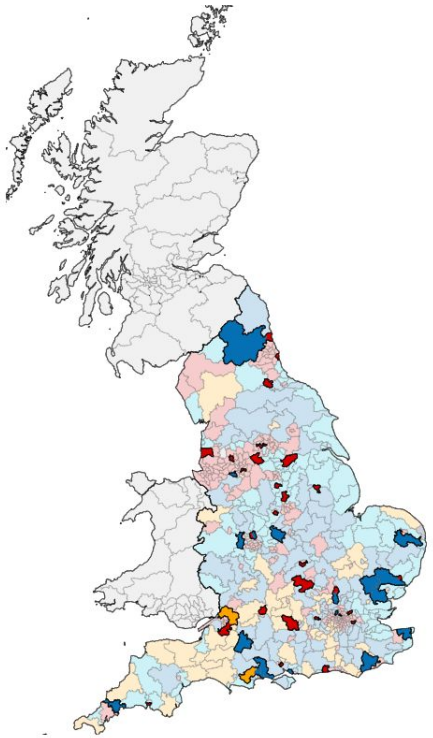
Source: More in Common MRP, July and September 2026

Tactical voting will help Labour, but is not a silver bullet

Under our tactical estimate in England, Labour would benefit from tactical voting, but it would not take them to an overall majority.

Looking at what happens if those who would strongly consider tactical voting switched, and weighing it by their motivation to vote against, Labour picks up 25 seats in England, Reform loses 30 overall and the Conservatives pick up 7. This would take Labour to within 51 of an overall majority, allowing them to reach 326 just by working with the Liberal Democrats.

Some crucial seats that would change include Doncaster North, which would become a Labour hold. Labour would, however, lose 3 seats to the Conservatives, including Finchley and Golders Green. Restore tactical voting for Reform could also further squeeze Labour.



Source: More in Common MRP; tactical voting m

Conclusions

Key findings

The Burnham Bounce is real, but the Labour brand has yet to recover.

The Labour Party is in a far better position than the one the Prime Minister inherited; they once again lead in the polls, and Andy Burnham is the most popular party leader.

But Burnham's personal approval rating far exceeds his own party's popularity: *only half of those who think the Prime Minister is doing a good job actually plan to vote Labour.*

While Labour has won back many of its progressive defectors from the Green Party, its brand remains poor in the Red Wall.

Andy Burnham is passing the "gets it" test and the "trying test", but he still needs to pass the "can" test.

Burnham has passed two of the three tests that Keir Starmer failed - Britons think he **gets it**, and they can see he is **trying** - but he has not yet convinced them he **can** deliver.

Early interventions on the cost of living were crucial in demonstrating that Andy Burnham understood the strain faced by Britons, and wanted to address it. But for some, small, piecemeal relief can feel insignificant unles followed by a long-term plan.

An election tomorrow would likely see Labour become the largest party, but with a historically low number of seats and a fragile lead.

More in Common's MRP estimates that Labour would be the largest party in a hung parliament with 250 seats, 76 short of a majority.

But the next election hangs in the balance: a two-point swing from Labour to Reform UK would make Reform the largest party. A three-point swing the other way would give Labour a majority.