



SPEAKING UP FOR YORKSHIRE

2017 GENERAL ELECTION MANIFESTO





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It took 10 months since she was installed in office and the calling of a General Election before the Prime Minister stepped foot in the county. Even then it was to a closed meeting of the party faithful in Leeds. But that disregard for

Yorkshire by Westminster based parties is not uncommon. Successive governments have chosen to simply leave Yorkshire behind, ignoring the potential of the Yorkshire people in favour of centralising power and funds in London.

The Yorkshire economy has had to totally re-engineer itself in less than a generation, but has continued to struggle without the appropriate support for education and skills, and infrastructure. Rural areas are equally neglected: villages now lack schools and other public services on which their contribution to the wider economy was founded. Farmers have been left in doubt about their futures following the vote to leave the EU and little has been said to ease their fears.

Thenations,regionsandcitiesallover the rest of the UK are forging their own futures as powers (albeit limited in some cases) are decentralised. Yet Yorkshire, with its 5 million people, its hugely significant economy and its sense of identity and community going back 1500 years, is unable to unleash the undoubted potential which exists here as local authority leaders continue to squabble over the future direction of our county.

The General Election is an opportunity to allow the people of Yorkshire to set their own priorities to tackle the distinctive challenges our region faces.



Obviously, Brexit was a defining moment in our politics but there are so many other important issues in Yorkshire today - education, health and social care, our crumbling infrastructure, our relationship with the rest of the UK and our preferred model of setting our own priorities through devolution. No one, it seems, is speaking up for Yorkshire. That is, except us.

Candidates across Yorkshire are standing for the Yorkshire Party to ensure that Yorkshire's voice is heard and that we get a better deal from Westminster.

Yorkshire needs a voice.
The Yorkshire Party will be that voice.
It's time to speak up for Yorkshire.

Stewart Arnold

Leader, Yorkshire Party



7 REASONS WHY YORKSHIRE NEEDS A VOICE

The Yorkshire Party is determined that Yorkshire should become a modern, thriving region. Yorkshire should offer the best for its people today and in the years to come. In this document, we discuss seven

reasons why we believe a Parliament for Yorkshire is necessary. But more than discussing just why it is necessary, this document outlines the real benefits it would bring to our county.



A MORE PROSPEROUS YORKSHIRE

"Yorkshire is rapidly becoming a globally recognised brand and is key to the success of many small and medium businesses."

Chris Whitwood, Deputy Leader and candidate for Doncaster Central



A Yorkshire Parliament will ensure Yorkshire can compete successfully in the national and international marketplaces.

As the United Kingdom prepares to leave the European Union and negotiate trade deals around the world, a Yorkshire Parliament would speak up for the interests of our companies and citizens.

We will ensure that public sector procurement policies in our county give small and medium sized businesses a fairer opportunity to tender by cutting contracts into more manageable chunks.



The Yorkshire Parliament will establish a dedicated economic development unit. On a local level, this unit will assist small businesses and entrepreneurs in growth and development. Nationally and internationally, it would be tasked with marketing Yorkshire as an excellent place to do business. We want to develop a 'Made in Yorkshire' label as a way of promoting the region and its products.



THAT

CHILDREN'S

A Yorkshire Parliament will fight for equal funding for our county's children and young people.

Education is a vital component of Yorkshire's future success. However, funding for children in Yorkshire, for both mainstream education and extracurricular youth services, still lags behind those in London. This is unfair and puts Yorkshire at a disadvantage. We will fight this funding gap until it is closed.

Every child is different, and those differences should be nurtured. We aim to put parents in direct control of their child's education by offering a genuine choice of schools at secondary level. This will require adaptation of the current academy system to ensure that they specialise in a variety of diverse areas. Parents will be given additional places on school governing bodies, with powers to monitor the levels of educational attainment.

**A
YORKSHIRE
INVESTS
IN OUR
FUTURE**



***"I feel our children are left out.
Primary school pupils in the North
receive £3,900 less per head than
students in London."***

Bikatshi Katenga, candidate for Huddersfield



"Yorkshire needs a voice to fight for fairer funding for the NHS. We need to integrate services and make them locally accountable."

Lee Walton, Mayor of Hornsea and candidate for Beverley and Holderness



A **HEALTHIER** **YORKSHIRE**

A Yorkshire Parliament will ensure access to health and social care services at a time and place that is both appropriate and convenient.

The National Health Service in Yorkshire is under considerable pressure due to poor funding and top-down targets. Local hospitals and wards have been threatened with closure, GP appointments can no longer be guaranteed in a timely manner, and cuts to social care budgets are creating further strain

by leaving the elderly stranded in hospital. This “bed blocking” costs our NHS millions and endangers the health of other patients.

We believe that an integrated health and social care system will allow people across Yorkshire to experience care appropriate to their needs. We will seek to bring health and social care together, while ensuring that patients and their families have a voice in policy development and delivery.



A Yorkshire Parliament will work alongside developers and social landlords to invest in our county.

Where we live and the home that we live affects every aspect of our lives. A future Yorkshire Parliament has an important role to play in providing secure neighbourhoods and affordable housing which is appropriate to people's needs and lifestyles.

Cooperative housing ventures are in a unique position to shape neighbourhoods and build communities, with all the connected social benefits. We will examine how the existing success of the cooperative movement could be expanded in Yorkshire.

Regeneration of brownfield sites instead of greenbelt land is the preferred option of many citizens across Yorkshire. Too often, this wish is ignored. New housing developments must be supported by improved infrastructure such as schools, GPs, dentists, parking and better public transport.



Photo credit: Helen Murray

"Democracy should be hopeful. I want an open welcoming Yorkshire able to invest in its own potential and respond to its own needs."

Tess Seddon, candidate for Leeds North East

A man with short brown hair, smiling, wearing a grey sweater with dark horizontal stripes. He is standing in a green field with a blurred background of trees and a blue sky.

A

GREENER YORKSHIRE

"Without greenbelt, towns and villages will be swapped for urban sprawl and lose their identity."

Bob Buxton, candidate for Pudsey



A Yorkshire Parliament will legislate to protect our countryside, wildlife, beaches, and rural life for the generations to come.

Yorkshire is home to some of the most beautiful and historic countryside and coastline in the world. We recognise that this must be protected and so we will act to restrict any fracking across the county.

Urban sprawl threatens to merge our towns and villages, ruining the historical character of Yorkshire and paving over green corridors. We will protect Yorkshire's greenbelt while investing in better public transport and cycle routes to improve our environment and help reduce the air pollution affecting many of our cities, towns and villages.

We recognise and accept our responsibility under the Paris Agreement to think globally but act locally. Yorkshire will set our own annual targets for the reduction of emissions and act to encourage the use of new and existing renewable energy sources.

Yorkshire already has an excellent record in natural energy sourcing such as wind farming. A Yorkshire Parliament can ensure emerging technologies are invested in. This not only reduces the county's carbon footprint, but also creates more skilled jobs.

A Yorkshire Parliament will invest in the county's infrastructure.

Full employment in a highly skilled and well-paid economy should be the goal of a Yorkshire Parliament. Regeneration is needed across the county, including former mining and woollen areas, coastal towns, small villages, and rural areas, along with our major cities.

We will combine the best of old and new for a modern age and a modern Yorkshire. Where possible, we will convert derelict mills and other industrial sites into facilities suitable 21st century industrial usage.

REGENE

We propose that free WiFi be extended to the whole of urban Yorkshire. We believe such connectivity would be a tremendous boost to innovation in a county which already has the highest number of home workers of any English region.

London, Scotland and Wales have benefited from meaningful devolution and higher public spending per head. This has enabled vast improvements in rail services and other forms of transport. In contrast, Yorkshire needs new lines, stations, and modern rolling stock on our railways. We need improvements to bus services, better road maintenance, and cycling routes to ensure our economic competitiveness.



FIND OUT MORE: RAIL PAPER



FIND OUT MORE: CYCLING PAPER

RATING **YORKSHIRE**



"My Yorkshire; chatty, direct and welcoming people, vibrant cities and stunning landscape, a country in miniature open to the world."

Diana Wallis, candidate for Haltemprice and Howden



**A YORKSHIRE
RICH IN**

SPORT & CULTURE

"Yorkshire has a rich sporting heritage. We're world class. It's time for fair play so we all get a chance to shine."

Mick Bower, candidate for Rotherham



Yorkshire prides itself on its great cultural edifices, its sporting prowess and the artistic endeavour of its people and communities. The Yorkshire Party believes that the riches that exist in our county should be improved and extended for all, not moved south on the whim of a metropolitan establishment. We also recognise the economic value of our county's treasures in both educational and tourism terms.

Our people, especially our young people, must have access to first class sporting facilities, not just to provide centres of sporting excellence for our elite sports men and women but also for the health and social benefit of all.

Yorkshire is home to many professional sports teams. Many supporters have suffered from financial mismanagement of their club's at a time when money in professional sport is at an all time high. The Yorkshire Party recognises the emergence of the supporters trust movement and the benefits that they offer to supporters.

Yorkshire has been bestowed with cultures from across the world, especially in the areas of music and dance. Our artistic communities must be supported by strong, properly funded, locally based arts organisations which represent our communities with access to sustainable funding.

OUR AMBITIONS

This manifesto sets out why Yorkshire needs a voice and how the Yorkshire Party will be that voice. We have highlighted how our county should become a modern, thriving region through real and meaningful devolution via a Parliament for the whole of Yorkshire. We recognise that might be a little way off so here we set out the core ambitions for our newly elected Members of Parliament and how we plan to achieve them, so ensuring that we give a voice to the people of Yorkshire.

Once elected, your Yorkshire Party Member of Parliament will:

Campaign to establish a Yorkshire Parliament, directly elected via a fair voting system. This parliament will be accountable to the electorate, making transparent decisions on their behalf, treating the needs and aspirations of everyone across Yorkshire equally. It will provide one united and powerful voice to Yorkshire.



Ensure that our exit from the EU and the negotiation of any future trade agreements benefit Yorkshire.

Demand the spending imbalance in education is rectified. A school in the City of London received £8,587 per pupil in 2015/2016, whilst a school in York received £4,202 per pupil over the same period. The Yorkshire Party recognises that this is patently unfair and impacts the potential of our young people.

Fight to prevent the closure of more hospitals or hospital wards across the county. Quality healthcare is not only vital to the continued health

of Yorkshire, but it is also crucial that this care is delivered as locally as possible.



Demand an equal share of infrastructure funding to improve Yorkshire's transport network. The ability of our county to attract private investment, exploit commercial opportunities, and to compete in the global marketplace is hindered by an outdated and, in some cases, crumbling infrastructure. For every £1 spent on roads, railways, flood defences and energy infrastructure in Yorkshire, the Westminster government spends £10 in London. Your Yorkshire Party MPs will fight this imbalance.

Seek to tackle the housing crisis in our county while continuing to protect the green belt. Every aspect of our lives is affected by where we live and the home we live in. Our health, family life, job prospects, educational attainment, finances, and general wellbeing are all impacted by our location and

home. It is important to encourage both housing developers and social landlords in Yorkshire to invest in good quality, affordable housing to buy and to rent.

Oppose Westminster's plans to introduce fracking across Yorkshire. At the same time, the Yorkshire Party recognises that local communities and energy suppliers must be engaged in developing a sustainable and affordable green energy policy.



Yorkshire is home to several barracks and army bases. The Yorkshire Party will fully support our armed forces veterans living in the county through our housing and other social policies.

Work with the police, community organisations and local authorities, to improve the safety of our communities. This includes an emphasis on measures to prevent domestic, racial, and sexual violence and abuse.

OUR STRATEGY

Yorkshire's renewal and prosperity will not occur overnight. Decades of chronic underinvestment and neglect by London can only be reversed by a dedicated team of individuals working together to speak up for Yorkshire.

To start moving in the right direction, we need three things:



***Building a fairer, stronger and
more prosperous Yorkshire within
the United Kingdom.***

Independent, freethinking, and hardworking Yorkshire Party candidates elected to parliament. Their purpose will be to represent the interests of their constituents and to speak up for Yorkshire at Westminster.

The Yorkshire Party trusts our elected representatives to act on behalf of their constituents without the need for a party whip or outdated political dogma. Your MP will be free to bring their own perspective to the issues of the day, challenging and scrutinising legislation, spending, and government policy on your behalf.



Every Yorkshire Party MP will act as a Yorkshire ambassador, seeking out opportunities for investment in skilled, well-paid jobs in modern industries. They will consult with their local communities to find imaginative and cost-effective solutions to the issues that face our county in the years ahead.



Your Yorkshire Party MP will fight for a fair deal for Yorkshire in public investment in education and infrastructure. They will work with local councils to protect services and defend your hospitals, libraries, museums, sports halls, rural schools and other amenities essential to developing and maintaining successful communities.



A Yorkshire Party holding Westminster to account during the negotiations on leaving the European Union and in negotiating any future trade deals with other parts of the world.

The Yorkshire Party is determined that any support of negotiations is conditional on the government obtaining the best possible deal for Yorkshire.



Any deal must bring with it opportunities for renewed prosperity and opportunity within our county. The Yorkshire workforce deserve access to high-skilled, well-paid in thriving modern industries, while their workers' rights are protected. Our companies must be allowed to compete fairly across the world, exploring and exploiting new markets for Yorkshire goods and services, while the environmental and human rights protections that have been developed over the last 40 years must be maintained.

The people of Yorkshire must be heard, regardless of whether they voted to stay or leave. Only if all concerns and aspirations are acknowledged can we begin to formulate a deal that will work effectively for Yorkshire.

Your Yorkshire Party will consult widely with constituents, local businesses, and trade union representatives. While we will support the government when they get it right, we will hold them to account when they don't. We will act in the interests of our county without prejudice or preconceptions.



A Parliament for Yorkshire with meaningful devolved powers and the ability to make decisions on behalf of the people living and working in our county.

A parliament would draw national and international investment into our county. It will ensure fair spending on education, the NHS and social care, along with listening to the concerns, needs, and aspirations of people across Yorkshire. Such a parliament can unite us, working for our common interests both at home and abroad.



Only by devolving power to an accountable, transparent and democratic Yorkshire Parliament will our county be able to meet its potential. Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and London have directly-elected parliaments or assemblies which allow them to make their voices heard.

Why shouldn't the people of Yorkshire have the same?



OUR PLEDGES

The Yorkshire Party is speaking up for:



A Yorkshire Parliament and control of our own destiny.



Yorkshire's interests as we leave the EU.



Investment in our region's infrastructure.



Integrated health and social care, delivered locally.



Better education for our children.



Protection of our greenbelt and a green Yorkshire.



A sporting and cultural Yorkshire.

Find out more, visit:

www.YorkshireParty.org.uk

Contact:

E: campaigns@yorkshireparty.org.uk

F: [Facebook.com/voteyorkshire](https://www.facebook.com/voteyorkshire)

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