



# Newsletter

## May 2026



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### Local Elections

Sadly Reform UK took control of 14 councils in England in the local elections. It now has overall control in 24 councils across Great Britain and is the largest party in a further eight.

Those where it has an overall majority include  
**County and District Councils** : Derbyshire, Essex, Kent, Lancashire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire, Suffolk and Newcastle under Lyme  
**Metropolitan Boroughs**: Barnsley Calderdale, Doncaster, Gateshead, Sandwell, South Tyneside, St Helens, Sunderland, Wakefield, Walsall and the London Borough of Havering.

**Unitary Authorities**: Durham, Thurrock, North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire.

<https://www.pollcheck.co.uk/reform-uk-councils>

The elections are a call to arms for redoubling efforts to counter the rise of the right and what many have warned looks like the resurgence of an “ugly” racism reminiscent of the 1970s and 1980s. In the Makerfield By-election, not just Reform but ‘Restore Britain’ is fielding a candidate. They are a further right, off shoot supported by Elon Musk and calling for the mass deportation of migrants.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/nov/04/nhs-staff-face-ugly-racism-akin-to-the-70s-and-80s-says-wes-streeting>

Many people attended May Day events round the country with a strong focus on unity, standing side by side with migrants and refusing to be divided.



Here are Keep Our NHS Public and ESCaD in Leeds

And here care workers from Unison speak out



The Together Alliance is aiming to set up a national network of local alliances to organise collectively against the Far Right. They are planning to hold summits on 10<sup>th</sup> October in London and 17<sup>th</sup> October in Manchester. See details here:

<https://www.togetheralliance.org.uk/organise-together>

### Picking up the cudgels with councillors

It is important to remember that Reform hold just one in eight of council seats and the results of the elections weren't all bad! The Green Party, whose policy on social care has roots in ESCaD's fore-runner, tripled its number of councillors and gained overall control of 5 Councils: Lewisham, Hackney, Waltham Forest, Norwich and Hastings and are the largest party in Lambeth. The Liberal Democrats, whose leader has personal experience of the struggle to get support for disabled children now control the new councils in West Surrey and East Surrey as well as Portsmouth and Stockport.

**This is a good time for us all to encourage Local Councils to look hard at what they can do locally** towards ending the Social Care Disgrace. Please check out and use our briefings for councillors and Mayors which should be on our website in the next few days. See: [www.endsocialcaredisgrace.org](http://www.endsocialcaredisgrace.org)

And on the national front the upcoming fight in the Labour Party for change in leadership and direction presents new opportunities to push our message through and we have a new Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

### **Streeting bows out; James Murray bows in**

Since resigning from his post as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Wes Streeting is suddenly talking about the need for vision, wealth taxes etc. In an excellent letter in the Guardian 25.5, full time unpaid carer Anne Crocker says that his statement in his resignation letter “Where we need vision, we have a vacuum. Where we need direction we have drift” is possibly the only true thing he has said since becoming a minister and nowhere has it been truer than in the Department of Health and Social Care! To top it off the recent Kings Speech had nothing to say on Social Care.

Keep Our NHS Public spell out how Streeting has consistently reduced the crisis in emergency care - which is responsible for an estimated 16,000 avoidable deaths per year - to questions of “management” and “efficiency”, pushing blame towards staff and minimising the consequences of under-capacity, understaffing, system overload and the state of social care. His answer to everything was more private sector involvement, which has failed dismally in Social Care.

<https://keepournhspublic.com/wes-streeting-privatisation-chaos-failure/>

**James Murray**, the new Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has tacked with Government on most issues so it would be unrealistic to expect much positive change but in his maiden speech in March 2020, he did tell MPs that they ‘must win the battle for the NHS and the social care system that we need’. Unlike his predecessor, he has accepted very little in the way of donations. He has also taken pains to meet regularly and listen to the concerns of our allied organisation, Ealing Reclaim Social Care Action Group, so we are hoping that our Ealing colleagues will lead us in piling on the pressure.

### **One up for Campaigners this month**

A group families have managed to secure the future of their adult, disabled children’s care home after uncovering serious alleged management failures in the charity which ran William Blake House in Northamptonshire. It owed £1.5m in

unpaid taxes, had paid its former Chair £1m in fees and was close to bankruptcy. Their action prompted the Charity Commission to launch an inquiry, helped to underpin a rescue plan and outflank potential takeover bids from private sector rivals, enabling Camphill MK Communities to take it on. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2026/may/22/families-secure-future-uk-children-care-home-uncovering-management-failures>

### **Carers UK Members Conference 28.4**

Report from Jo Walton, Chair of our Carers Group



Seen here with her daughter Sarah

A stand-out of the Conference for me for me was a talk from an amazing carer who had become a volunteer for carers in her area, putting them in touch with the right people and being a listening ear at all times of the day and night. She recommended a book which she said kept her smiling, ‘The Selfish Pig’s Guide to Caring by Hugh Marriott’. I have only just started and it is indeed an irreverent, sometimes poignant and perceptive look at our task!

The focus for the day was what carers want to see in Carers UK’s new five-year strategy to help build Carer Friendly Communities. This is also the focus of this year’s Carers Week: June 8th to 14<sup>th</sup> and next year’s too. The ideas coming from the floor, as you would expect, centred around social and continuing care, true co-production, costs, respite, burnout, benefits, recognition and an acknowledgement that having to wait for support may make the difference between being able to perform a task or having to abandon it. There was talk of improvements to communities and venues to make them truly accessible for those for whom we care, and therefore us as Carers.

