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| **SW Women's Manifesto calls for action and Party Manifesto commitments** | | | |  |  |
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| **SW Women's Manifesto Aim** | **Party Manifesto Commitments** | |  |  |  |
|  | **Conservative** |  | **Labour** |  | **Lib Dem** |
| **Overall: to reduce women's  inequality in their safety, their health, their power and their economic position** | “The next Conservative Government  will scrap the Human Rights Act, and introduce a British Bill of Rights.” P60 |  | “The next Labour  Government will go further in reducing discrimination against women, requiring large companies to publish their gender pay gap and strengthening the law against maternity discrimination. Where there is evidence more progress is needed, we will enforce the relevant provisions within the Equality Act.” P(67) |  | “We will enact the remaining  unimplemented clauses of the Equality Act 2010.” P(105) Maintain the Public Sector Equality Duty and encourage external providers to the public sector to follow best practice in terms of diversity.” P(109) |

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| **To improve women’s access  to jobs with adequate hours and decent pay:** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Calls for Action** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The introduction of a living wage  throughout the South West. | “We accept the  recommendations of the Low Pay Commission that the National Minimum Wage should rise to £6.70 this autumn, on course for a Minimum Wage that will be over £8 by the end of the decade.” P(21) |  | “We will raise the National  Minimum Wage to more than £8 an hour by October 2019, bringing it closer to average earnings. We will give local authorities a role in strengthening enforcement against those paying less than the legal amount.  And we will support employers to pay more by using government procurement to promote the Living Wage, alongside wider social impact considerations. Our Make Work Pay contracts will give tax rebates to businesses who sign up to paying the Living Wage in the first year of a Labour Government. Publicly listed companies will be required to report on whether or not they pay the Living Wage.” (P23) |  | “Ask the Low Pay Commission  to look at ways of raising the National Minimum Wage, without damaging employment opportunities.” P(47) “Establish an independent review  to consult on how to set a fair Living Wage across all sectors. We will pay this Living Wage in all central government departments and their agencies from April 2016, and encourage other public sector employers to do likewise” P(48) |
| 2. Extension of the provision of  free childcare; quality, subsidised, affordable, local, flexible childcare to younger and older children; and care for vulnerable adults and the elderly. | “in the next Parliament we will  give families where all parents are working an entitlement to 30 hours of free childcare for their three and four year-olds.” P(27) |  | “We will help families by expanding free childcare from 15 to 25 hours per week for working parents of three and four-year-olds, paid for with an increase in the bank levy” (P44) “We will also introduce a legal guarantee for parents of primary school children to access wraparound childcare from 8am to 6pm through their local primary school.” P(44) • We will protect the Sure Start budget, and open up an additional 50,000 childcare places by requiring Sure Start children’s centres to offer childcare.  • Double paid paternity leave to four weeks, and increase the level of paternity pay to over £260 a week. • Consult on allowing grandparents who want to be more involved in caring for their grandchildren to share in parents’ unpaid parental leave, enabling them to take time off work without fear of losing their job.(Women's Manifesto) “Labour will end time-limited 15-minute visits, introducing year-of-care budgets to incentivise better care in the home. By stopping the use of zero-hours contracts, where regular hours are being worked, we will improve the working life of care workers.” P(36) “We will recruit 5,000 new home-care workers – a new arm of the NHS – to help care for those with the greatest needs at home.” P(36) Labour will introduce a new duty on NHS organisations to identify carers so that they can be linked up with the right support. We will ring-fence the money councils get for carers’ breaks to ensure this money gets spent on carers.” P(37) |  | “Start by providing 15 hours a week of free childcare to the parents of all two-year olds. We will then prioritise 15 hours free childcare for all working parents with children aged between nine months and two years.” P(43) “Complete the introduction of Tax-Free Childcare, which will provide up to £2,000 of childcare support for each child and include childcare support in Universal Credit, refunding 85% of childcare costs so work pays for low earners” P(43) |
| 3. A re-introduction of free ‘English for  Speakers of Other Languages’ (ESOL) services for those whose poor level of English is restricting their access to decent jobs. |  |  |  |  | Maintain funding for people to  develop and improve their English language skills to enable them to fully participate in society and achieve their potential.” P(108) |
| 4. Improved access to the means to  enforce equal pay legislation through making equal pay audits mandatory and eliminating tribunal charges for individuals taking discrimination cases to tribunal. | “we will require companies  with more than 250 employees to publish the difference between the average pay of their male and female employees” P(19) |  | “We will abolish the  Government’s employment tribunal fee system as part of wider reforms to make sure that affordability is not a barrier to workers having proper access to justice, employers get a quicker resolution, and the costs to the tax payer do not rise.” P(23) • Strengthen the law against maternity discrimination. (Women's Manifesto) |  | “Ensure swift implementation of  the new rules requiring companies with more than 250 employees to publish details of the different pay levels of men and women in their organisation. We will build on this platform and, by 2020, extend transparency requirements to include publishing the number of people paid less than the Living Wage and the ratio between top and median pay. We will also consult on requirements for companies to conduct and publish a full equality pay review, and to consult staff on executive pay.” P(47) “Improve the enforcement of employment rights, reviewing Employment Tribunal fees to ensure they are not a barrier” P(48) |
| 5. Improved access to well-paid  jobs through their local distribution, underpinned by a public transport system that facilitates the needs of working women and their childcare arrangements. | “We will devolve far-reaching  powers over economic development, transport and social care to large cities which choose to have elected mayors” P(13) |  | “City and county regions  will be given more power over the way buses are operated in their area. They will be able to decide routes, bear down on fares, drive improvements in services, and bring together trains, buses and trams into a single network with smart ticketing.” P(26) |  | "Carry out a review of bus funding and bus policies and introduce a five-year investment plan to give the industry and Local Authorities certainty and help plan investment. We will support local areas that want to bring forward plans for regulating the bus network in their area.  Give new powers to Local Authorities and communities to improve transport in their areas, including the ability to introduce network-wide ticketing like in London.” P(88) Work with Local Authorities to integrate transport networks in rural areas, building on the work of Liberal Democrat Ministers’ Total Transport pilot”. P(89) |
| 6. A change in legislation from ‘the right to request’ to ’a right to have’ flexible working and the availability of all jobs on a flexible working basis, irrespective of industry and sector. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7. Revision of the use of zero hours  contracts by employers through, for example, contracts with guaranteed hours where a zero hours worker does regular shifts; and simplified employment law giving all workers the same basic employment rights. | “We will also take further  steps to eradicate abuses of workers, such as non-payment of the Minimum Wage, exclusivity in zerohours contracts and exploitation of migrant workers.” P(21) |  | “Labour will ban exploitative  zero-hours contracts. Those who work regular hours for more than 12 weeks will have a right to a regular contract. We will abolish the loophole that allows firms to undercut permanent staff by using agency workers on lower pay.” (P23) |  | “We will create a formal right to  request a fixed contract and consult on introducing a right to make regular patterns of work contractual after a period of time.” P(48) |
| 8. Improved careers guidance to  girls and women that is not biased and avoids stereotyping the roles that men and women should perform in the job market. |  |  | “…we will introduce a new,  independent system of careers advice, offering personalised face-to-face guidance on routes into university and apprenticeships.” • Provide face to face careers  advice in schools, ensuring that girls know that no ambitions are off limits. (Women's Manifesto) |  | “Help everyone in work on a low  wage step up the career ladder and increase their hours, reducing their need for benefits, with tailored in-work careers and job search advice.” P(47) |
| 9. A halt in the reduction in welfare benefits and the  proposed further cuts of £12bn from the welfare budget which are disproportionately affecting women. | “We will find £12 billion from  welfare savings, on top of the £21 billion of savings delivered in this Parliament” P(8)  “We will replace the Jobseeker’s Allowance for 18-21 year-olds with a Youth Allowance that will be time-limited to six months, after which young people will have to take an apprenticeship, a traineeship or do daily community work for their benefits.” P(18) “So we will ensure that ‘18-21 year-olds on Jobseeker’s Allowance’ no longer have an automatic entitlement to Housing Benefit.” P(18) “And we will see through our welfare reforms, lowering the benefit cap and rolling out Universal Credit” P(27) “We will freeze working age benefits for two years from April 2016, with exemptions for disability and pensioner benefits – as at present – as well as maternity allowance, statutory maternity pay, statutory paternity pay, statutory adoption pay and statutory sick pay” P(28) “We will lower the maximum amount that a single household can claim in benefits each year from £26,000 to £23,000, so we reward work” P(28) |  | “We will keep the household  benefit cap and ask the Social Security Advisory Committee to examine if it should be lower in some areas. And we will cap structural social security spending as part of each spending review, so that it is properly planned and controlled.” P(47) “…we will not cut tax credits” P(47) “We support the principle behind Universal Credit – that there should be a smooth transition into work – but it must be affordable and fit for purpose, so we will pause and review the programme” P(47)  “…..the Bedroom Tax ….. is cruel, and we will abolish it.” P(48) |  | “Complete the introduction of  Universal Credit (UC), so people are always better off in work. We will review UC to address any issues regarding ‘cliff edges’, and ensure increased working hours are properly incentivised for all claimants” P(43) “We will retain the overall cap on a household’s benefits and believe this should continue to be set at around the average family income.” P(43) “Introduce a 1% cap on the uprating of working-age benefits until the budget is balanced in 2017/18, after which they will rise with inflation once again. Disability and parental leave benefits will be exempt from this temporary cap” P(45) "Continue requirements for all new claimants for Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) to have their English language skills assessed, with JSA then being conditional on attending English language courses for those whose English is poor." P(127) |

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| **To improve women’s access  to health services** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Calls for Action** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10. Recognition, by the Department of Health, that  there are different physiological needs of women in relation to major conditions, such as cancer and cardio vascular disease, and introduction of treatment and information tailored to these differences. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11. Commissioners of services ensuring that the  specific needs of women, including BME, lesbian and bisexual, disabled, older and younger are taken into account when specifying and commissioning services. They should also be required to monitor satisfaction levels across different groups of women and address any issues identified. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12. Healthcare staff, including those involved in  health promotion, recognising the ways in which gender affects medical and health care, taking account of the different ways in which women experience and access that care and treating women with ‘women’s ailments’ with respect and dignity. | “we will ensure that women have  access to mental health support during and after pregnancy, while strengthening the health visiting programme for new mothers.” P39 |  |  |  |  |

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| **To increase women’s safety in  the home and on the street** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Calls for Action** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13. Ending the exploitation of women  by the media, through legislation, if necessary. | “And we will stop children's  exposure to harmful sexualised content online, by requiring age verification for access to all sites containing pornographic material and age-rating for all music videos.” P35 |  | • Appoint a new commissioner to enforce  minimum standards for tackling domestic and sexual violence. (Manifesto for women) |  | Continue to support free media  and a free and open Internet around the world, championing the free flow of information.” P(153) |
| 14. Improving relationship education in schools.  The school curriculum should include compulsory specific learning and discussion on respect and dignity in relationships with specific reference to the unacceptability of domestic and sexual abuse/violence. |  |  | “We will introduce  compulsory age-appropriate sex and relationships education. We will encourage all schools to embed character education across the curriculum, working with schools to stop the blight of homophobic bullying.” (P37) |  | “Introduce a minimum curriculum  entitlement – a slimmed down core national curriculum, which will be taught in all state-funded schools. This will include Personal, Social and Health Education: a ‘curriculum for life’ including …. and age-appropriate sex and relationship education …” P(60) Require the teaching of sexual consent in schools as part of age appropriate sex and relationships education. P121 |
| 15. Greater response to perpetrators of domestic  and sexual abuse and enhanced support for these victims including women-only services |  |  | “We will publish a  Violence against Women and Girls Bill, appoint a commissioner to set minimum standards in tackling domestic and sexual violence, and provide more stable central funding for women’s refuges and Rape Crisis Centres” P(53) “…we will widen access to legal aid for victims of domestic violence” P(53) • Ban the use of community resolutions in domestic violence cases.  • Make changes to DNA retention, so that rape suspects have their DNA recorded and stored.  • Establish a National Refuge Fund and provide stable funding for rape crisis centres. (Women's manifesto) |  | Improve the provision of  rape crisis centres and refuges for victims of domestic violence with a national network and national sources of funding. P121 Create a national helpline for victims of domestic and sexual violence – regardless of gender – to provide support, encourage reporting and secure more convictions. P121 |
| 16. Improved policing of women’s safety  in the street. |  |  | “We will protect  neighbourhood policing. …… we will be able to safeguard over 10,000 police officers for the next three years. …… This will be backed up by a new statutory Local Policing Commitment, guaranteeing neighbourhood policing in every community.” P(51) |  |  |

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| **To increase women’s power  and influence** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Calls for Action** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17. Continuance and extension to all Parties of  all women shortlists for parliamentary candidates. |  |  | “We remain committed to  achieving a better balance in Parliament, including through the use of all women shortlists in Labour Party parliamentary selection contests.” P(67) |  |  |
| 18. Regulation to require quangos and company  boards to appoint a minimum proportion of women. The voluntary approach is not working. Recruitment measures could include requiring executive search agencies to include women on their shortlists and for internal promotions to include women shortlists. |  |  | • Set a goal for fifty per cent of ministerial appointmentsto public boards to be women. (Women's Manifesto) |  |  |
| 19. Criteria for appointment should be subject to  consultation/agreement with relevant VCS groups, particularly women’s organisations. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20. Criteria requiring previous experience of  working on Boards/quangos should be banned. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21. A boardroom diversity strategy that would  entail reporting on boardroom diversity policy, including policy relating to gender, a ‘comply or explain’ regime which would help to improve transparency, along the lines of measures introduced by the Prudential Regulation Authority. We would like to see this extended to all large public and private sector companies. |  |  |  |  | Require diversity in Public  Appointments. We will introduce a presumption that every shortlist should include a BAME candidate. We will establish an independent committee that will monitor the drive for greater diversity in public appointments and verify the independence of the appointment process to public bodies, boards and institutions.” P(109) |
| 22. Regulations should require that the hours of  meetings and the work of political bodies, quangos and boards are set to encourage a diversity of attendance, including for carers, people with disabilities, the elderly, and people with timed commitments such as the employed or students. The promotion of flexible and/or part-time working at senior levels should be encouraged within organisations, especially by those already working at senior levels. |  |  |  |  |  |