

Labour leader says that those facing economic hardship in Remain Islington are exactly the same

by EMILY FINCH

JEREMY Corbyn has explained why he believed people who face economic hardship in Islington may have voted overwhelmingly to remain in the EU referendum while those in a similar economic situation in the East Midlands voted to leave.

In a sit-down interview with the *Tribune* ahead of the December 12 general election at which he hopes to become the next prime minister, Mr Corbyn said that people were “not lesser socialists” if they had voted for Brexit.

The Labour Party leader was speaking following his campaign-launch on Monday at the Brickworks Community Centre in Crouch Hill to be re-elected as Islington North MP.

During a 45-minute speech, he told the crowd that someone living in private rented accommodation in Stroud Green Road on Universal Credit and on a zero-hours contract who “worried about your children’s future” faces “exactly the same economic situation” to someone in Mansfield in the East Midlands living with the same pressures.

He said: “[The] interests of both of your families is

Corbyn: ‘The referendum was a hit against the way people perceived their communities have been treated’



exactly the same in getting rid of a government that has impoverished this country so much. There is so much that unites people against this government and unites people around the policies

that we put forward.” When asked by the *Tribune* why he believes Islington and Mansfield voted so differently in the EU referendum – Islington was 75 per cent Remain while Mansfield was 70 per cent Leave – he said this was because of the decline in “industrial strength” of some Leave areas.

He said: “I think the

feelings of many of the Leave areas are one of anger at the lack of investment, and a feeling that the industrial strength they had is gone. This area [Islington] has never really had any one big employer or one big industry. In fact, it’s quite a long time since London was dominated by manufacturing industry. And so there’s that kind of diver-

sity of employment.” Mr Corbyn added: “If you go to a town, say Consett in Durham, a steel town, it’s gone. Everything gone and it was never replaced by anything else. Take Shirebrook, Nottinghamshire, which was a modern, very efficient colliery with well paid jobs, albeit dangerous to work in the mines, and it was a secure

community where the mining union and miners were sort of the gem of the town. Gone, replaced by Sports Direct, zero hours contracts and very low pay, and a sense of anger and resentment. So the referendum was essentially a hit against the way in which they perceived their communities have been treated. And so I kind of get that.”

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Lib Dem candidate says ‘majority’ of



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THE Liberal Democrat candidate looking to unseat Labour’s Emily Thornberry in Islington South and Finsbury said the “majority” of people she has canvassed in the past week said they would be voting for her, writes Emily Finch.

Kate Pothalingam’s confidence came as various newspapers including the *Sun* and the *Daily Telegraph* reported that “private internal polling” by the Labour Party has suggested that shadow foreign secretary Ms Thornberry is “at risk” of losing her seat.

When asked for her thoughts on the poll, Ms Pothalingam said: “While door-knocking on Saturday, Sunday and Monday in Canonbury, south of



Essex Road, I heard plenty of reasons to understand why the polling may indicate this for the Labour Party.” She added: “I would say out of the people we

as those in Leave Midlands



Mr Corbyn's party has pledged to renegotiate Boris Johnson's Brexit deal but also hold a second EU referendum if elected. "Over the past four or five years I've always travelled a lot around the country," he said. "So my whole strategy which had, yes, stretched some people's patience at times, has been to try and bring peo-

ple together. And that's why we adopted the policy we have, which will result in a referendum. It will result in a choice."

Mr Corbyn called the Brexit party leader Nigel Farage's decision to stand down candidates in Tory-held seats as an "unholy alliance", adding: "And they think that somehow or other they can frighten us with this. It's not going to work."

He said Labour will campaign on issues "that matter" such as "social justice issues", "climate issues" and their "sensible policy on Brexit".

When asked how he thinks the "alliance" came to be, he said: "Basically, they've worked together in the referendum campaign, and I think they worked together over a long period of time on their vision of a Trump-type relationship and it's interesting that both Farage and Johnson seem to have a very close personal relationship with President Trump."

He said that the Labour Party does not get "fair coverage" in between elections in the media but changes to broadcasting rules for the last general election, in 2017, "changed the whole nature of the campaign very quickly, we got more coverage." He added that party officials are "monitoring very closely all broadcast media for the time Labour gets on air, the emphasis that's put on our comments and our statements and demanding the broadcasting rules be carried out to the letter".

'I fear for the future' Corbyn says he is worried about NHS under Tories

JEREMY Corbyn says he "fears for the future" if Boris Johnson remains prime minister after the Christmas general election as he launched his campaign to get re-elected as MP for Islington North, writes Emily Finch.

The Labour leader has spent the majority of the past month campaigning in marginal constituencies throughout the country and visiting families affected by devastating floods in Yorkshire and the Midlands.

But Mr Corbyn returned to Islington on Monday night where he was met by hundreds of party members at the Brickworks Community Centre in Crouch Hill where he promised that his government would leave a "legacy" rivalling the NHS through the introduction of a national education service.

In a wide-ranging speech that lasted more than 45 minutes, Mr Corbyn explained his vision for Brexit, the NHS, education and the environment. He was joined on stage by long-time friend and Hackney North MP Diane Abbott alongside former Grange Hill actress and comedian Francesca Martinez.

He told the crowd that "I fear for the future" if the general election resulted in Boris Johnson remaining in power.

He said that "whatever direction" the Tory leader Boris Johnson takes the country in terms of Brexit that it was "clearly in the direction of a trade deal with the United States".

"It is a Trump trade deal. And



Jeremy Corbyn speaking at his campaign launch on Monday night at the Brickworks Community Centre

last time I looked the USA didn't do two-way trade agreements, they do one-way trade agreements, they use their power to impose conditions on the other country they've done the trade deal with, and they do very well out of it," he said.

He warned that the country under Mr Johnson would see more cases of the NHS being opened up for sale, especially to American companies, alongside an erosion of rights for workers and consumers with the food industry becoming unregulated.

The election is about ending austerity and investment in people's lives for the future, he said.

He said that he wanted to lead a country "that is united and never ever to be divided by racism, by discrimination and all that goes with that". And warned that "racism only divides [and] those that promote racism know

that division works. You divide the working class through racism. Who wins? The powerful, the rich and the Tory party."

He re-committed to the introduction of a National Education Service which was first introduced in the Labour Party manifesto for the 2017 general election which calls for a "cradle-to-the-grave" education system that is free.

The National Education Service would be the "legacy of our government" and he compared this pledge to the introduction of the NHS by the post-Second World War Labour government.

He stressed the importance of

Labour's Green New Deal – a programme to de-carbonise the UK – because the "climate injustice is massive" with the poorest in the world currently suffering the most.

He said his Green New Deal would see the transfer of wealth from the richest to the poorest.

"It's about investing in communities. It's about creating those green industrial jobs which we think we can create 300,000 of in Britain, in energy and other things," he said.

He ended his speech by warning that the alternative to a Labour government was a "political system dominated by

cosy deals between [Nigel] Farage and Johnson. Leading us into the hands of Trump and the kind of politics that he is putting forward."

Diane Abbott told the crowd that she backed Mr Corbyn as prime minister because of his "very genuine commitment to families" and the NHS.

"The other thing that will make Jeremy a truly transformative prime minister is his commitment to a massive shift of wealth and power from the few to the many," she said.

Francesca Martinez praised Mr Corbyn for being a "kinder and fairer" leader than most.

those canvassed would vote for her



reach door knocking, the majority of people are suggesting they will vote Lib Dem in this election. They might not be for a variety of reasons Lib Dem



Left: Kate Pothalingam; above: Emily Thornberry submitting her PPC papers to the Town Hall

members, but are going to vote Lib Dem."

Ms Pothalingam said she "didn't know" if the developments would mean getting more resources from Lib Dem

head office.

Islington Lib Dems have been optimistic following their EU election results in May which gave them a 873 vote lead over Labour despite not having any councillors in the Town Hall since 2015.

So much so that the Lib Dem Islington North candidate Nick Waking has changed his Twitter profile to say he is "the next MP for Islington North".

A local Constituency Labour Party (CLP) document seen by the *Tribune* dated last month said: "Islington South and Finsbury CLP recognises that the Liberal Democrats may pose a real threat to us in the forthcoming general election, but believes that this threat can be decisively

defeated if all members are armed with 'facts to fight with' on the doorstep and in debate."

Islington South Labour activists told the *Tribune* that they were not aware of any private, internal polling that showed Ms Thornberry's seat was at "risk". She was elected on a 20,000 majority in 2017.

An activist, who asked to remain anonymous, said: "Canvassers in Islington South say they are worried but we believe the Labour vote will hold up. Emily's majority will be dented but it won't result in her losing her seat."

They called the articles in the *Sun* and *Telegraph* "tub-thumping" but added: "Labour should not be complacent."

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