

Newsletter from John Cryer
January 2020

I would like, again, to express my heartfelt gratitude and respect to all those people who worked hard and also came out to vote during some pretty grim weather, to secure another huge majority in Leyton and Wanstead.

In particular, our agent, Carol Riley, and many officers, councillors and activists pulled together extremely well and with very little notice. The last general election in Britain to be held in December took place more than 100 years ago and, after experience last month, it's very easy to see why.

The result generally was, clearly, deeply disappointing. Superficially it was the worst result since 1935. But in 1935 we managed to triple the number of Labour MPs from an all-time low so at least we were heading in the right direction.

This time, the Tories have been in power for 10 years yet we still went backwards.

There were a number of reasons for this. Brexit clearly played a major part. Labour supporters and members in the big cities were strongly pro-remain while the opposite was the case outside the cities, particularly in the mining areas. I find it difficult to see that any leader could have squared that circle. Contrary to certain voices on both sides of the argument, there was no magic formula which would have reunited the party and the movement and the shift toward a second referendum came very late in the day.

There were a large number of policies which were very popular. There is widespread public support for greater public ownership, investment in public services, redistribution of wealth and much stronger rights at work. However, certain policies were thrown in at the last minute and that looked like desperation. I have no idea, for instance, why the commitment on WASPI women was not included in the original manifesto.

The personal standing of the Labour Leader also had a negative effect in some northern constituencies. To some extent this was due to a ferocious media onslaught against the party and against him personally.

There were other factors at play. The failure to deal effectively with anti-semitism, which has been abject, continues to affect us and the next leader must ensure that racists are expelled from the party.

There are clearly very strong views, as there always are during leadership elections, but already we are seeing members attacking affiliated unions for backing the “wrong” candidate. Those who take this stance should remember that the Labour Party was born out of the trade unions and that we have, uniquely, a federal structure. Perhaps the phrase agreeing to disagree is relevant.

As you may know, I have just returned from two weeks’ paternity leave and am getting stuck into work in parliament and in Leyton and Wanstead. Surgeries will now resume as usual as well as street surgeries, coffee mornings, meetings with community organisations, schools, mosques, churches, etc.

Kind regards
John

UK Parliament Disclaimer: this e-mail is confidential to the intended recipient. If you have received it in error, please notify the sender and delete it from your system. Any unauthorised use, disclosure, or copying is not permitted. This e-mail has been checked for viruses, but no liability is accepted for any damage caused by any virus transmitted by this e-mail. This e-mail address is not secure, is not encrypted and should not be used for sensitive data.