



Faiza Shaheen tells Burnham: abandon Israel to win back voters

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Faiza Shaheen and Andy Burnham

Former Labour candidate Faiza Shaheen has told Andy Burnham what he needs to do if heâ??s to win back the voters Keir Starmer drove away:

[#politicslondon](#) asks, how can Labour win back lost voters? [@faizashaheen](#) Build council houses. Make people materially better off through policies like free school meals. End arms sales to Israel. pic.twitter.com/sErsFewDoh

â?? Saul Staniforth (@SaulStaniforth) [June 28, 2026](#)

Itâ??s a lesson many in the Labour Party donâ??t want to hear. But one way or another, they will learn it.

Faiza Shaheen

Shaheen [stood as an independent](#) in the 2024 general election [after Labour blocked her from standing](#). She said at the time:

I have reached this decision following hundreds of messages from people in my community, who say there are no options left for them. They are tired of the Tories but now feel they canâ??t trust Labour.

They feel disenfranchised by Labour's decision to remove me and feel it would be impossible for the party to win here without a local candidate, rooted in the community, and that such a voice is vitally needed.

Shaheen's message is even more true today. This is because Starmer refused to acknowledge the scale of change necessary to free us from the misery of 40+ years of neoliberal politics. For those who are unfamiliar, that's the market-first politics of Margaret Thatcher – the politics that Tony Blair ran with and David Cameron made even worse with his austerity drive.

Shaheen is now the executive director at Tax Justice UK. Appearing on *Politics London* on 28 June, the following question was put to her:

Faiza, you campaign on inequality. Do you accept that policies like scrapping the two-child benefit cap, raising the minimum wage, cutting taxes on energy bills, they have helped poorer people, haven't they?

Shaheen answered:

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I think we have to be really careful in the story that's told there versus the reality. Even the two-child benefit, you know, that was forced upon him. It was something that Labour Party MPs actually got in trouble for – for supporting the end of that in the very beginning of his tenure. That's the truth of it. He was forced to do that.

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one of the reasons that people have been so angry for him, with him, for instance, is that his policy on Palestine and Gaza, and how he hasn't been strong enough on that. And I think also in terms of the Cost-of-Living crisis, that wherever you live in this country, it hasn't felt like materially our lives have got better.

So, yes, he stood down, and I think that's a good thing. I think after the various scandals and U-turns, I mean, Mandelson, that was completely immoral to put him in that position as ambassador to the US. And so I think he needed to go.

And to be quite honest, I don't feel a lot of sympathy for him. I feel a lot of sympathy for people that have suffered in this country and around the world because he hasn't been strong enough.

Top three

Shaheen also provided her 'top three things' Burnham has to do to turn it all around:

He needs to make sure that people materially are feeling better off. And if he wants to win voters back, it's those things plus stopping arms sales to Israel. That will help him hugely

in London and elsewhere across the country.

The signs are that Burnham won't learn these lessons. After all, [he wants an ex-Labour Friends of Israel chair to be his chief of staff](#) And while he's hinting at tackling equality, [hinting is all he's doing](#)

If our worries prove correct, the question won't be if Labour can win the next election; it will be if Labour can continue to exist at all.

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By [Willem Moore](#)

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