



Rumours swirl of an early election if Burnham wins

Description

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Andy Burnham in front of campaign banners

Andy Burnham is running to become the MP for Makerfield, Wigan. As everyone knows, if Burnham wins, he'll challenge Keir Starmer for the Labour leadership, becoming the PM if he succeeds. Given that Labour has a huge majority and the party doesn't have to call an election until 2029, most assume he won't go to the polls early. If rumours are to be believed, however, he might be eyeing one up:

EXCL: Andy Burnham is considering holding a snap general election if he becomes PM.

<https://t.co/4vTIQ2oH5Y>

?? Kate Ferguson (@kateferguson4) [May 30, 2026](#)

Wargaming

The latest rumours comes from the *Sun*, and as such have to be taken with a pinch of salt. At the same time, Labour politicians love talking to the *Sun* despite its [long and rancid history](#) so the source doesn't necessarily discount the veracity.

According to the Murdoch rag, [a senior Labour source said](#)

Andy considering an early general election. They are wargaming it.

But Labour MPs would absolutely hate it. They are worried about losing their seats.

If Andy becomes PM I expect he will have to promise the PLP (Parliamentary Labour Party) that he will not call a snap election.

They will want him to sign the pledge in blood.

Regardless of the finer details, this anonymous quote allowed the *Sun* to run a story claiming Burnham wants an early election. This is convenient for Burnham's opponents, because they're claiming Burnham's dastardly plan is to - you guessed it - call an early election:

We are staring at a nightmare scenario: Burnham wins, an early General Election follows, Labour takes power, and Britain faces five more years of socialism.

Only Reform can stop it. <https://t.co/zKYQpdjChN>

Rael Braverman ([May 29, 2026](#)

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So Reform have gone from demanding an early election to desperately trying to stop one because they think they'll lose. And they admit Andy Burnham really is so popular nationally he'll be able to reverse Reform's surge and win for Labour.

<https://t.co/hnhvOFmGgN>

(Dan Hodges) (@DPJHodges) [May 25, 2026](#)

For the past year, Reform's war cry has been "Stارmer out now". This has proven popular with the public - a public which understands the quickest way to get Starmer out is to get Burnham in. The problem for Reform politicians is that Burnham would likely be a tougher opponent, so now they have to work to keep Starmer in without admitting that's what they're doing.

Given this, it's entirely possible one of Starmer's allies briefed these rumours to hurt Burnham's chances. Burnham himself, meanwhile, seems to have dismissed the rumours:

I know you know this but don't believe everything you read in the papers. 🙄😂

Andy Burnham (@AndyBurnhamGM) [May 30, 2026](#)

At the same time, it's not entirely out of the realms of possibility that Burnham might actually want an early election. Also, it wouldn't be the first time Burnham went back on his word:

Ah! Did you not promise to serve a full term as mayor of Manchester?
<https://t.co/VPiBM2Wq08>

â?? Count Binface (@CountBinface) [May 30, 2026](#)

Why would Burnham want to?

Over the past decade, weâ??ve had two early elections:

- **Theresa May:** Despite having a majority, May called an election in 2017 hoping to take advantage of Jeremy Corbynâ??s unpopularity. In the end, Corbynâ??s [Labour realised the largest vote share increase since 1945](#) with May demoted to a minority government as a result.
- **Boris Johnson:** Johnson inherited Mayâ??s minority government, which meant he couldnâ??t do much of anything. In 2017, Brexit wasnâ??t an issue, because both parties committed to following through on it. By 2020, however, Keir Starmer had maneuvered Labour into backing a second referendum, which meant the election itself became a second referendum itself. This nuked Labourâ??s chances, and produced a majority for Boris Johnson ([although not as large as the one won by Starmer in 2024](#)).

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Clearly, calling an early election would be a risky move; especially when current polling looks like this:

 POLL | Reform lead by 5pts

- ➔ Ref: 24% (-1)
- Con: 19% (+1)
- Lab: 17% (-)
- Grn: 16% (+1)
- Lib: 14% (-)

â?? Seats â??

- ➔ Ref: 258
- Con: 104
- Lib: 85
- Grn: 82
- SNP: 46
- Lab: 38
- Plaid: 11

Poll: [@YouGov](#) 25-26 May (+/- vs 18 May) <pic.twitter.com/L5hyZ359IB>

â?? Stats for Lefties 🍉🇧🇷 (@LeftieStats) [May 27, 2026](#)

Although Burnham would get a boost in the polls when compared to Starmer, it's far from a guarantee that he'd win:

Saturday's front page: Burnham would face battle to beat Farage in a general election, polling reveals

Read the full story: <https://t.co/0hQigxFIU#TomorrowsPapersToday>
pic.twitter.com/wGkSePMn2b

The i Paper (@theipaper) [May 29, 2026](#)

There is some reason to suspect Burnham might want to go to the polls early, however.

Rudderless

When it comes to big policies like proportional representation, Burnham has said Labour needs put them in a general manifesto before enacting them. King in the North also doesn't seem to have a concrete plan for office, as we've reported:

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- [Burnham to support Mahmood's racist immigration changes](#)
- [Burnham is silent on wealth taxes not a promising sign from potential PM](#)
- [Andy Burnham's role with Iain Duncan Smith's think tank just shows he's more of the same](#)
- [Burnham WON'T back proportional representation this parliament](#)
- [Shapeshifting Burnham ditches trans rights to panic-grab Reform votes](#)
- [Burnham slammed for saying he won't renationalise Thames Water](#)

If Labour call a general election, the party will have to produce a manifesto. [As the Manchester Mill reported](#) Burnham is a lot happier being the face of the operation than the ideological engine i.e. he'd no doubt love for the wonks to go off and draft a plan for him. The question is which side of Labour would be in charge of this manifesto the rotten side or the *really* fucking rotten side.

Burnham movement

As Stats for Lefties and Philip Proudfoot note, the direction of travel for Burnham right now is rightwards:

The road to Wigan Keir <https://t.co/iZUFH3pjG7>

Philip Proudfoot (@PhilipProudfoot) [May 30, 2026](#)

Whether Burnham calls an election or not, we need to make it very clear this country will not tolerate more of the same. And if he runs an election with a manifesto thatâ??s Starmerism 2.0, we will fight against it tooth and nail.

Featured image via [Christopher Furlong \(Getty Images\)](#) / [Christopher Furlong \(Getty Images\)](#)

By [Willem Moore](#)

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