

THE CHOICE AT THIS ELECTION

Dear Elector,

On the day I first became your MP, Labour gained power under Tony Blair. There was huge enthusiasm for the so-called “New Labour” brand – but there is little of that for the current Labour leadership, despite Labour’s lead in the polls. Voting half-heartedly for an unimpressive Opposition creates a serious risk: if people become disillusioned with a mediocre Labour administration soon after electing it (or – even worse – electing a Labour-Liberal Democrat Coalition), they will lose their faith in democratic politics. Only those on the far Left and extreme Right would benefit from that. So, here is my approach to our present situation.

■ In December 2019, UK voters backed the only major Party – the Conservatives – not trying to dilute or overturn the result of the Brexit referendum. We reasserted our right to govern ourselves, stepped off the ‘conveyor belt’ to an EU Superstate and ended a constitutional crisis.

■ **Within months, courtesy of the Chinese Communist state, the Covid-19 crisis cost us a colossal £310bn to £410bn and incalculable human suffering and bereavement. Amazingly, the economy substantially recovered, though the personal losses endure. Russia’s attack on Ukraine in 2022 and the Middle Eastern horrors since 2023 leave us facing financial pressure and a grave security challenge.**

■ It is a strength of our democratic system that, in times of crisis, decent MPs – from both Government and Opposition – work across party political boundaries whenever possible. This is what, as your MP during that traumatic period, I have tried to do.

(1) Working closely with pro-NATO Labour and Conservative Parliamentarians, I have campaigned relentlessly for maximum support for Ukraine: if Putin is seen to lose, Russia’s threat to the West will drastically diminish.



In Westminster with the WASPI Women

(2) Having raised the Infected Blood Scandal repeatedly since 2014, I supported the cross-party vote last December forcing a compensation body to be set up at last.

(3) My comments on the Sub-Postmasters wrongly convicted of theft are quoted in the principal book on that shocking injustice.

(4) Following the US abandonment of Afghanistan, I have strongly backed efforts to save those who defied the Taliban and are now stranded and at serious risk – especially women, interpreters and former employees of our Armed Forces.

■ I have also supported the WASPI Women, War Widows who lost their special pensions on remarriage, and Leaseholders facing faulty cladding costs through no fault of their own.

The people of New Forest East have made all this work possible: at election time, I seek your endorsement to continue.

*Yours sincerely,
Julian Lewis*