

# England's declining life expectancy is clear ind...

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As [The Guardian](#) has noted this morning:

*Life expectancy has stalled for the first time in more than 100 years and even reversed for the most deprived women in society, according to a landmark review which shows the gap in health inequalities is yawning even wider than it did a decade ago, in large part due to the impact of cuts linked to the government's austerity policies.*

This is not the first time the link between austerity and life expectancy has been made, of course. Prof Danny Dorling's work suggested that more than 100,000 deaths per annum might be linked to the impact of austerity in recent years. But as the Guardian also notes:

*Sir Michael Marmot's review, 10 years after he warned that growing inequalities in society would lead to worse health, reveals a shocking picture across England, which he says is no different to the rest of the UK and could have been prevented.*

And it is not just deaths that matter:

*The government has not taken the opportunity to improve people's lives and life chances over the last 10 years, the report says. Real cuts to people's incomes are damaging the nation's health for the long term. Not only are lifespans stalling, but people are living for more years in poor health.*

I think the following quotes from Sir Michael also worth noting:

*"This damage to the nation's health need not have happened. It is shocking."*

*"The UK has been seen as a world leader in identifying and addressing health inequalities but something dramatic is happening. This report is concerned with England, but in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland the damage to health and wellbeing is similarly unprecedented."*

*“Austerity has taken a significant toll on equity and health, and it is likely to continue to do so. If you ask me if that is the reason for the worsening health picture, I’d say it is highly likely that is responsible for the life expectancy flat-lining, people’s health deteriorating and the widening of health inequalities.*

*“Poverty has a grip on our nation’s health — it limits the options families have available to live a healthy life. Government health policies that focus on individual behaviours are not effective. Something has gone badly wrong.”*

I have blogged throughout the austerity years and made the NHS such an issue at one point that I think I was noted as the fourth most active social media campaigner against the 2012 NHS reforms that increased the impact of market forces upon it.

Those reforms have failed. A healthcare system that was intended to, and did, deliver worse health outcomes in a political environment of hostility towards large parts of the UK population is indicative of a chronic political malaise within government during this period.

Of course Brexit was the logical consequence.

And now populism builds on that to make people believe that their condition is the fault of ‘others’ - most especially in and from the EU when it is in fact entirely explained by Conservative economic policy of the last decade.

Labour, meanwhile, is fighting itself.

I hate to use the word revolution: it has connotations I do not like in terms of potential harms done. But we need nothing less now. The culture of obsequiousness to finance that has inculcated this country for four decades needs to be swept away. People are dying because of it. That has to end. We must have the public services we need. And we can afford them - because with the right policies there are the people to deliver them and no shortage of funds.

But is there, even now, the will?