

## What is Labour doing?

Published: January 13, 2026, 4:21 am

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There is an [article in the Financial Times](#) this morning with the following headline:

*The government has no time to lose if it wants to reform social care*

The article is by Sarah Woolnough, who is the chief executive of the King's Fund. In it, she laments the confusion that has befallen those tasked with the management of social care since Labour came into office and notes:

*So in a few short months the mood in the social care sector has gone from cautious enthusiasm to bewilderment and, now, anger. Bewilderment at what long-term vision the government really has for social care. And anger at the fact that such a critical part of the national health and care infrastructure is being so consistently overlooked and is expected to simply suck up the extra costs it now faces.*

*Yet it is not too late to rescue what has been a disappointing and confusing start by the government.*

I am not now going to do the obvious thing and analyse what she has to say about social care. Anyone who knows anything about the NHS knows that Wes Streeting has no chance of delivering reform in that service unless social care is improved. Sarah Woolnough can address that issue better than I can.

Instead, what I am interested in is her observation that Labour came into government without, to be blunt, any idea as to what they were going to do and have done nothing to improve on that situation since they arrived in office.

The public is undoubtedly suffering buyer's remorse when it comes to labour, but as yet, they have seen relatively little that directly impacts their daily lives as a result of its inaction and incompetence. The managers in social care already seeing what that means, as they are in the NHS and elsewhere.

There were those of us who said in advance of the election that Labour was not saying what it was going to do because it did not have a plan. Labour apologists told us to be

quiet because it was actually keeping its tinder dry, and the big left-of-centre vision would become clear once the election was won. I always felt (and said) that this claim by the Labour apologists was baloney.

So it has proved to be. Labour arrived in offices without a philosophy or vision, with no plan, and no clue as to why it wanted to be in government. The sole aim was getting into office whilst not being Corbynite. Labour has proved to be at least as hollow as I expected, and maybe worse.

The trouble is, there are real problems in the country that do need solutions, and the lacklustre and ideas-free leadership of Labour has only succeeded since being elected in providing that they are not the people to deliver any of the reforms that are required so that people in this country might enjoy the public services they need and deserve, and on which the country is dependent.

The only question to ask in that case is, will the disappointment end, and will the confusion be cleared? There are, I regret, no more reasons to think so than there were back in June when those of us with eyes to see and ears to hear realised that Labour was saying nothing about its plans because it had no plans. The confusion will continue, as will the disappointment.

When history comes to appraising Starmer's government, there will be one over-arching theme, and that will be missed opportunity.

It's a missed opportunity we can ill afford.