

## The opinions of the House of the People

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As I [mentioned earlier this week](#), I spent Monday morning at the House of the People citizens' assembly, discussing wealth, inequality, taxation, and how we might improve the well-being of people in our society, which is the topic we were asked to address.

Steve Keen, my co-presenter, and I had no involvement in the deliberations of those who attended our session. I think that was entirely appropriate. It was essential that they had the right to ignore absolutely anything that we said. However, it seems that we were listened to. [The press release now put out by The House of the People said:](#)

*The outcome is a People's Charter, which has **5 top priorities** for political action. The full report will be released in due course. Here are the headlines:*

- \* Tax wealth by removing tax loopholes and closing tax havens
- \* Slash political corruption by banning lobbying, gifting, and second jobs in politics
- \* Establish a Future Generations Act which priorities people and nature over GDP
- \* Implement an immediate embargo on all arms, trade and support for Israel and other countries which violate international law
- \* Grant councils power to repurchase disused homes and protect renters' rights

It is being proposed that a national Citizens' Assembly, like the House of the People and with power of legislation, should replace the House of Lords as an antidote to failing democracy in the UK. There is to be a second sitting of the House of the People in 2026.

A full report with the 5 priorities and all other agreed proposals will be released by Assemble, the grassroots democracy organisation who organised the event. The 5 priorities in full are:

- \* Tax wealth by removing tax loopholes and closing tax havens: ending pension tax subsidies; charging the equivalent of NI on investment as income over £5,000 a year; apply VAT to banking services.

- \* Strengthen and enforce anti-corruption laws; prohibit lobbying, gifting and second jobs in politics.
- \* A Future Generation Act – Implement a first principle act that ensures all government policy prioritises well-being, sustainability, and nature over GDP for all current and future generations.
- \* Immediate total embargo on arms, trade and support for all countries that are in violation of international law, with immediate priority to be given to Israel.
- \* Long term decommodification of housing, ensuring renters rights; councils repurchasing disused housing/empty homes/holiday homes to repurpose and build green council housing; enshrining structural laws without loopholes; and implementing rent increase caps.

All of the final proposals will be included in the full report. Some of these key proposals include:

- \* A legal constitution which provides the people of Britain & Northern Ireland with the power to decide when to start or join a war.
- \* Arrest, trial and sentence for those complicit in genocide abroad and in the UK.
- \* Guaranteed basic income for all.
- \* Remove the principle of free movement of capital through introducing capital controls.
- \* End fuel poverty through a universal free quota of green energy after which the cost of energy progressively increases
- \* Urgently enact strict AI regulation.
- \* Democratise the honours system.

Much, but not all, of the economic thinking reflected in that statement does appear to have been influenced in some way or other by Steve or me.

In particular, the tax suggestions are close to much of my thinking, whilst Steve's comments on guaranteeing basic income (as opposed to universal basic income, or a job guarantee) are in there.

I will be interested to see how this develops but so far I am encouraged by the processes of interaction that took place, and as I previously noted, the open-mindedness, diligence and willingness of those who took part.

I remain of the opinion that a citizens' assembly can only be advisory. I do not think that they can have any other role. However, if participants are carefully selected from those who demonstrate aptitude and willingness, then I now believe there can be a

benefit from them in an advisory capacity.