

# Press Release

Wednesday 23rd March, London, UK



## **Polly Tommey's Campaign Continues... Labour Party first to respond.**



Last week Polly Tommey sent letters to the three main party leaders urging them to talk to her about autism in the UK and the action needed. Yesterday the Labour Party responded with an invitation to discuss how they can help the autism community. Tomorrow, Polly will go to Downing Street to do just that.

Polly says, "The Labour Party have not underestimated the power of the autism community. With over 6 million votes and the current likelihood of a hung parliament, it really is in the interest of the party leaders to come forward with some concrete policies to encourage our vote; we have the power to determine the general election outcome."

Polly's billboards will be displayed from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March in London's most viewed digital billboard locations, as well as multiple locations throughout the UK.

**For further information and to arrange interviews, please contact:**

**Polly Tommey**  
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## Notes for Editors

### *Polly Tommey*

Polly Tommey has a child with autism. She is Founder of The Autism Trust ([www.theautismtrust.org.uk](http://www.theautismtrust.org.uk)), a UK registered charity focused on creating a future with purpose for children everywhere with autism. The charity has been running from her family's home in Hampton, West London since 2007. Polly is also Editor of The Autism File now the leading retail magazine on autism in the UK, USA.

Polly's recent achievements include meeting Gordon Brown at Downing Street in June last year following her headline grabbing "Dear Gordon Brown..." billboard campaign. The meeting was instrumental in the government's move towards helping those with autism. Polly returned to Downing Street in December to meet with Sarah Brown and other figureheads of the autism community. In 2009 Polly was asked to represent The Autism Trust in the External Reference Group that helped formulate 'The strategy for adults with autism in England (2010)' which was released on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2010. Polly hosted The International Autism Conference 2009, supported by the Department of Health, which succeeded in its aim in bringing together people from across the diverse world of autism. Her efforts in the world of autism have gained her nominations for both 'Woman of the Year' and Red Magazine's 'Red's Hot Woman of the Year' Awards as well as a nomination for BSME's 'Campaign of The Year'.

Polly is regarded as one of the leading figures in autism in the UK, as a campaigning and influential journalist, and a sector expert in the media. Polly presents regular radio programmes including: Autism Issues From Around the World on Autism One Radio; she is Secretary of the Autism Human Rights & Discrimination Initiative; and is a frequent attendee and speaker at conferences worldwide. She is married to Jonathan Tommey who runs The Autism Clinic and they have three children, one of whom has autism.

### *The Autism Trust*

The Autism Trust recognises the immense gap that exists between the demand for and availability of existing residential and professional support options once children with autism leave supported education through the world.

The goal of the charity is to provide this support through the development of a network of consistently outstanding and innovative outreach centres for autism worldwide. We consider it essential that each of these Centres of Excellence not only provides help and support to individuals with autism but also to their families and those involved with their care, support, ongoing education and development.

### **Autism in the UK:**

Autism affects over half a million people and is the cause of often overwhelming stress for families of those with autism. This is not a passing matter; **autism numbers have increased dramatically in the last twenty years from 5 in 10,000 in 1989 to more than 1 in a 100 (100 in 10,000) today.** Something needs to be done to reduce the effects felt by people coping with autism.

***The UK government has taken a major step forward in responding to the challenge ...***