

# Greater Manchester Mayoral — Candidates

Candidate profiles for the Greater Manchester mayoralty (2028 election and current candidates).

- [Andy Burnham — Mayor & Labour Candidate](#)
- [Other Parties — Potential Candidates](#)

# Andy Burnham — Mayor & Labour Candidate

## Andy Burnham — Greater Manchester Mayor & Labour Candidate

**Role:** Incumbent Mayor of Greater Manchester (since 2017) **Also standing in:** Makerfield by-election (18 June 2026) **Last updated:** 25 May 2026

### Bio

Detail	Info
<b>Full name</b>	Andrew Murray Burnham
<b>Age</b>	56 (born January 1970)
<b>Born</b>	Aintree, Merseyside
<b>Education</b>	St Aelred's Catholic High School, Newton-le-Willows; Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge (English)
<b>Family</b>	Married to Marie-France van Heel; three children
<b>Residence</b>	Greater Manchester

### Political History

Role	Years
MP for Makerfield	2001–2024
Chief Secretary to the Treasury	2007–2008
Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport	2008–2009

Role	Years
Secretary of State for Health	2009–2010
Shadow Education Secretary	2010–2011
Shadow Health Secretary	2011–2015
Shadow Home Secretary	2015–2016
Labour leadership candidate	2015 (4th place), 2016 (withdrew)
Greater Manchester Mayor	2017–present (re-elected 2021, 2024)
Makerfield by-election candidate	2026

## Key Achievements (as Mayor)

- **Bee Network** — First bus franchising scheme outside London; took control of buses in 2023
- **Clean Air U-turn** — Scrapped GM Clean Air Zone charging plan in 2023, replacing with non-charging alternative
- **Homelessness** — A Bed Every Night scheme during COVID
- **Devolution** — Expanded GMCA powers; pushed for rail devolution
- **Standing up to government** — Famously clashed with Boris Johnson's government during COVID Tier 3 negotiations (Oct 2020)

## The Leadership Question

Burnham is widely seen as the most likely alternative to Keir Starmer for the Labour leadership. His Makerfield campaign is viewed through this lens:

- **NEC blocked** him from standing in Gorton & Denton by-election (Jan 2026) — widely seen as Starmer protecting his position
- **Allies say** Burnham has a "credible plan to return to Westminster within weeks"
- **Starmer's unpopularity** — polling consistently shows Burnham outperforming Starmer in favourability
- **If he wins Makerfield**, he becomes an instant leadership contender

## Twitter/X Discussion

- **Leadership framing dominates:** "Burnham has plan to return to Westminster 'within weeks', allies say" — shared and debated constantly

- **Dual candidacy practicality:** "Andy Burnham is trying to please everybody at once. Macclesfield, the country and the markets..."
- **The nickname debate:** "King of the North" is used both positively and as a criticism
- **Electoral risk:** "Massive gamble for Andy Burnham if he resigns as Greater Manchester Mayor now" — warnings about Reform potentially winning a mayoral by-election

## Reddit Discussion

Burnham is one of the most-discussed Labour figures on r/ukpolitics. The dominant threads cover his leadership prospects, the NEC block (seen as Starmer's fear), and whether he can be both mayor and MP. His record on the Bee Network is generally praised; housing targets and clean air are criticised.

# Other Parties — Potential Candidates

## Greater Manchester Mayoral Candidates — Other Parties (Potential)

“ The next Greater Manchester mayoral election is due in May 2028. No candidates have been formally declared by any party as of May 2026. This file profiles likely candidates based on previous elections and current party positions.

**Last updated:** 25 May 2026

---

### Conservative — Likely Candidate

**No candidate announced.** In the 2024 election, the Conservative candidate was Nick Buckley, a local businessman and former police officer. He came second with 18.6%.

**Likely profile:** A local councillor or business figure. Given the Tory collapse in GM (polling at 2% in Makerfield), the Conservative candidate is unlikely to be competitive.

---

### Reform UK — Likely Candidate

**No candidate announced.** Reform UK did not stand in the 2024 mayoral election (their candidate, Dan Barker, got 2.4%). However, Reform's surge in GM — winning all 8 Makerfield-area council wards in the May 2026 locals — means they will almost certainly field a serious candidate in 2028.

**Likely profile:** Could be Robert Kenyon if he doesn't win Makerfield, or another local figure. Reform will see the mayoralty as their best chance of a breakthrough in the North West.

---

## Green Party — Likely Candidate

**No candidate announced.** In 2024, the Green candidate was Hannah Spencer, a local activist. She came third with 8.4%.

**Likely profile:** A local Green councillor or activist. The Greens have been growing in Manchester (won Gorton & Denton by-election Feb 2026) and may target the mayoralty more seriously.

---

## Liberal Democrats — Likely Candidate

**No candidate announced.** In 2024, the Lib Dem candidate was Jake Austin (now the Lib Dem candidate in Makerfield). He came fifth with 5.9%.

**Likely profile:** Another local councillor. The Lib Dems are a minor force in GM mayoral elections but consistently stand.

---

## Twitter/X Discussion

Very little mayoral-specific candidate discussion given the election is 2 years away. Most discourse focuses on Burnham's leadership prospects and the Makerfield by-election. The main theme is:

- **"Labour's collapse in the May 2026 locals has Reform UK surging — they're the clear favourites to snatch the mayoralty in a by-election"** — the risk if Burnham resigns

## Reddit Discussion

The mayoral election is barely discussed on Reddit at this stage. When mentioned, it's in the context of Burnham's future — if he leaves the mayoralty, who replaces him, and could that trigger a Reform breakthrough in GM.