Twitter Thread by Operation Cupcake



Operation Cupcake
@PhillipsBarrie



Jess Phillips is funded by a Luxury Property Developer behind a number of controversial schemes. The register of financial interests lists a donation totaling £6,000 from Court Consultants. Plus a £8,000 a year sideline from the Tories. #LabourLeaks

Jess Phillips MP's office is funded by a property developer criticised for not including enough affordable housing in his tower blocks. #LabourLeaks

Court Consultants is controlled by Birmingham property developer Anthony McCourt. He is a longstanding financial backer of Jess Phillips. In 2017, Anthony McCourt also gave £3,000 to Phillips to help with the running of her local Labour party.

Councils try to oblige property developers to build some affordable housing in their new buildings in return for planning permission. But recent developments involving Antony McCourt failed to meet even these limited attempts by councils to increase the amount lower-cost housing.

McCourt runs his developments through his other company, Court Collaboration. Recent Court Collaboration schemes have also been criticised for not containing enough affordable housing. #LabourLeaks

Court Collaborations are also proposing Birmingham's "One Eastside" development, which the developer says will be "Birmingham's tallest skyscraper". The development is being sold to investors on the basis of high and raising rents.

They are told that "strong rental yields are expected". Court Collaborations also say that "average asking rents in Birmingham have increased by 16 per cent since 2014" – boasting about this to potential landlords, even though it's a bad thing for renters. #LabourLeaks

Property developers like Anthony McCourt backing Labour MPs is not unheard of, but it is unusual. Far more big developers back the Tories. The Stone Yard scheme is a collaboration with one such Tory backer: Tony Gallagher.

They added that the plans for a 30 story tower block "trample over the interest of the local community and will quite literally overshadow the residents and businesses that make this historic neighbourhood what it is today".

VICE asked Jess Phillips's campaign if her donations from McCourt and his company came from somebody who shared Labour's values on housing, and whether they gave him any influence over her position. #LabourLeaks

A spokesperson said: “Jess’ campaign is based on speaking TRUTH and being Honest about what needs to happen in our party and our country. She will continue to do this without fear or favour.”

Anthony McCourt did not respond to VICE's request for comment.

Labour MP Jess Phillips has an £8,000-a-year sideline working for top Tory donor and former Conservative deputy chairman Lord Ashcroft. I asked her if a Labour MP working for such a prominent Tory activist’s firm was a good idea but got no response. https://t.co/HqQ2OJAOnd

Phillips has been deputy editor of The House magazine, a glossy weekly aimed at MPs which has been owned by Ashcroft. The House generally publishes entirely friendly profiles of Tory ministers or Labour MPs, it has carried unusually negative pieces about Corbyn-supporting MPs

The House and the Politics Home website and runs a very extensive set of meetings at party conferences which bring together MPs and corporate sponsors. Since Cameron exited, Ashcroft also became a big Tory donor again, dining with Theresa May at Chequers. #LabourLeaks #CONLAB

She is deputy editor of The House, while the editor is Tory MP Sir Graham Brady — he gets £26,000 for the job.

Brady is a powerful Conservative MP because he is chair of the 1922 Committee which represents the interests of all Tory backbenchers.

Lord Ashcroft used an offshore trust to shelter wealth. The Brexiter caught up in 2010 row over ‘non-dom’ status has a trust in Bermuda The value of the trust fluctuated, but a leaked financial statement having assets of $450.4m (£341m) in 2006. https://t.co/DmcjtGfKWf

The Punta Gorda Trust was set up in April 2000 when he was a “non-dom”, with his three children named as beneficiaries. Ashcroft was named as the settlor and a beneficiary, the only one entitled to income for life.

Jess Phillips costs over 12 months can be reasonably estimated at £362,875. Of that, £105,468 is earnings (MP salary plus other work). A further £207,157 is from expenses. Lastly, £80,250 was received from donations + £30,000 campaign money #LabourLeaks https://t.co/ejhJ7ydkHx