

Amelia Womack demands waiving of visas for Ukrainian refugees in final conference speech as deputy leader



5 March 2022

- **Amelia Womack calls for a joined-up resettlement program for refugees, with funding for councils and support services**
- **Final speech to Green Party Conference as deputy leader will reiterate that the Green Party provides alternatives to the main parties.**
- **Womack: “This government and opposition has failed at every hurdle, so today I am calling on them both to open the doors and waive the visas”.**

Green Party Deputy Leader Amelia Womack will use her last speech in the role to her party's conference today to call for the government to ensure that Ukrainian refugees are able to find safety in the UK.

Addressing party members, Womack will call for the UK to match the generosity of European neighbours by waiving visa requirements for refugees fleeing Ukraine.

Womack will support the calls from Green council leaders such as in Brighton and Hove and Lewes to properly fund local councils to facilitate refugee resettlement and support programmes. Earlier this week, Deputy Leader of Brighton and Hove council Hannah Clare warned that unless more funding is forthcoming from the Government, support services, including those provided by voluntary sector organisations, will not be able to cope. [1]

Amelia Womack will highlight the dangerous gaps in policy that are not being addressed by either of the main parties, after the Labour Party refused to support open routes for refugees to reach the UK. [2]

Womack will say: “As a country we must allow refugees to enter the UK and to safety. This government and opposition has failed at every hurdle, so today I am calling on them both – to you Boris Johnson and to you Keir Starmer – open the doors and waive the visas, open safe and authorised routes to those fleeing war.”

Womack will urge the government to “deliver a joined up resettlement program for refugees, with funding for councils and support services that matches the generosity of our European neighbours.”

Having served for 8 years as the party's deputy leader, Womack will not stand for re-election as the party's rules do not allow an individual to serve more than that time in a leadership role. Womack will use her speech to celebrate the successes the party has achieved in her time, including winning council seats and European elections across the country.

She will say: "Over those eight years, we have experienced some highs for the party and for the country, and some real lows. Throughout it all, the Greens have constantly been setting the agenda and from being the party of 16,000 members that we were when I was first elected we are now 51,000 strong and a growing force across the country.

"While oceans and global temperatures have risen, we have raised the alarm – and people have heard our call. Not just because of the almost daily climate catastrophes – floods, wildfires, extreme weather – but because people are seeing that the whole system is rigged against ordinary people and against the natural world. All generations have been coming together to expose how the deep inequality scarring our country is blighting people's lives."

Notes

1. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2022/03/02/local-councils-prevented-by-government-from-helping-ukrainian-refugees,-warn-greens/>
2. <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/labour-ukraine-refugees-welcome-starm er-b2026527.html>

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