

[Greens call for public inquiry into HS2 mismanagement](#)



8 October 2023

The Green Party conference called for a full public inquiry into the Conservative Government's mismanagement of HS2, in an emergency motion to its Brighton conference.

Members called for Parliament to investigate:

- Lack of oversight and regulation of HS2 finances
- The mismanagement of the Euston rebuild
- The removal of safeguarding of the route, effectively an attempt to sabotage future governments
- The redirecting of funds from HS2 cancellation to road building schemes, which is incompatible with the Climate Emergency

Green Peer Natalie Bennett said: "It is clear that whatever anyone's views on HS2 as a project, the Conservatives have hopelessly mismanaged both the build and the most recent decision to cancel the project.

"To restore trust, we need to ensure that lessons are learnt from this disastrous experience and the public has a clear view of responsibilities.

"Particularly, there needs to be an examination of how money can be transferred from rail to road spending in this cavalier and non-transparent way."

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced that Phase 2 of HS2 from Birmingham to Manchester would be cancelled.

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[Green Party backs a four-day working week](#)



8 October 2023

The Green Party has thrown its weight behind a four-day working week following a motion at their conference in Brighton.

Welcoming the decision by Party members to back the policy, Catherine Rowett, Green Party spokesperson on Work, Employment and Social Security, who proposed the motion, said:

“The UK has one of the highest working hours rates in Europe while having one of the least productive economies. The Green Party has today backed a policy of introducing a maximum 32 hour working week where workers have a right to request these reduced hours be worked over four rather than five days at no loss of pay.

“A recent trial of a four-day week with a range of organisations from diverse sectors and sizes [1] found that of the 61 companies that participated, 56 are continuing with the four-day week, with 18 confirming the policy is a permanent change.

“The trial found there was an improvement in employees’ well-being, an improvement in work-life balance and an increased ability to combine paid work with care responsibilities. For the businesses involved in the trial, revenue stayed broadly the same over the trial period while the number of staff leaving decreased significantly, dropping by 57% over the trial period.

“The evidence is clear. A four-day working week is good for business, good for workers, good for the climate because people will have to commute less, and it is now confirmed as Green Party policy.”

ENDS

Notes

1. <https://autonomy.work/portfolio/uk4dwpilotresults/>

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[Green Party votes to ban ‘High Carbon Adverts’](#)



7 October 2023

- Adverts that promote goods, products and services that are carbon intensive are “incompatible with a liveable future.”
- We need to make space for adverts for products and services which will boost local economies and help create a fairer and greener world.

At their conference in Brighton, Green delegates today backed a motion put

forward by the city's constituency MP, Caroline Lucas, calling for an immediate ban on 'High Carbon Advertising'. They voted to ban adverts that promote goods, products and services that are carbon intensive, with Lucas declaring them "incompatible with a sustainable society or liveable future."

Welcoming the motion, Sian Berry, who is campaigning to become the next Green MP for Brighton Pavilion when Caroline Lucas stands down at the next election, said:

"We need to end the sprawl of adverts seeking to persuade us to buy products and services which wreck our climate, damage our environment and worsen our health. We need instead to make space for adverts for products and services which will support our local economies and help create a fairer and greener world – adverts for things such as active travel, healthier foods and sustainable fashion.

"Controls on advertising are common. Transport for London restricts advertising for a range of products including junk food, and is now close to banning gambling promotion, while France and Amsterdam are also working on high carbon adverts."

Caroline Lucas, Green Party MP for Brighton Pavilion, said:

"Carbon intensive companies are polluting the planet, and greenwashing their climate-wrecking activity through glitzy advertising campaigns which portray them as paragons of sustainability.

"I'm delighted the Green Party has backed this motion to immediately ban high-carbon advertising and help end the scourge of greenwashing on our society. It's time for adverts to reflect the best of society, rather than the worst."

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[Green Party calls on companies to put communities and environment ahead of shareholder dividends](#)



7 October 2023

* Shareholder dividends must not be the single most important criterion for company policy making

*** Companies need to invest profits in transitioning their operations to meet social and environmental objectives**

Companies should be required to put environmental and social priorities ahead of financial returns to shareholders. That is what members at the Green Party's conference in Brighton voted through today.

The motion, that passed with a large majority, makes clear that the right of shareholders to dividends must not be the single most important criterion for company policy making and that all those with a stake in the company's decisions – including workers, consumers, the local community and advocates for the local environment – must have the right to make informed input into those decisions. Similarly, the campaign for the Better Business Act is pushing for a change in UK law to ensure every company in the UK aligns their interests with those of wider society and the environment [1]. They report that 77% in the UK want businesses to be legally responsible for their impact.

Ellie Chowns, Green Party parliamentary candidate in North Herefordshire, said:

"I'm delighted that the Green Party today agreed that the Companies Act 2006 should be amended so that directors of a company must prioritise public well-being and avoid negative environmental and social consequences. This means that companies will need to invest profits in transitioning their operations to meet social and environmental objectives before distributing dividends to shareholders. This is an idea popular with the public and even with many businesses themselves."

"No industry has demonstrated more clearly the need to put environmental and social priorities ahead of financial returns than the water industry. Since privatisation, this industry has leaked out almost £70bn in dividends to shareholders while it has failed to invest in updating its infrastructure [2]. This has left us with toxic rivers and waterways and sewage contaminated coastlines. If ever an industry needed to put the interests of consumers, local communities and the environment ahead of the financial returns for shareholders, this is it."

Notes

1. [About The Better Business Act – A Campaign for Better Business](#)
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/dec/01/water-companies-debt-since-privatisation-ofwat-refuses-impose-limits>

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[“Four for 24”: Only Green MPs will stand up for solutions to UK’s housing crisis](#)



6 October 2023

- Greens unveil target candidates for next general election with plan to ensure everybody can afford a quality home
- Fairer, Greener Homes Guarantee will provide funding to help households heat their homes and give renters the right to demand landlords insulate their homes
- Carla Denyer: “We think everyone deserves a warm, secure and affordable home”
- Adrian Ramsay: “Only by having more Green MPs will we have people in Parliament advocating the solutions to the country’s housing crisis”

The co-leaders of the Green Party today (Friday 6 October) officially unveiled the next generation of Green MPs alongside their plan to ensure everybody can afford to live in a quality home.

In a keynote speech at the party’s Autumn Conference in Brighton, (Friday 6 October) [1], co-leaders Carla Denyer and Adrian Ramsay set out their ambitious plan to quadruple Green representation in Parliament after the next general election.

They said the party’s four target candidates [2] will hold the next government to account and push for their Fairer, Greener Homes Guarantee – a policy package designed to ensure everybody has access to a warm, secure home.

Denyer said:

“We think everyone deserves a warm, secure and affordable home. That’s how to build stronger communities and better lives for all.

“Yet successive governments have left a generation of renters unable to put down lasting roots because they can’t afford to get on the housing ladder – can’t even touch the first rung.

“The broken housing market leaves people much less likely to feel at home where they live – it’s hard to prioritise building relationships with your neighbours and local shop owners when you know you could get evicted with barely a moment’s notice.

“And too many private landlords in England are lining their pockets despite a quarter of privately rented homes not even meeting the most basic standards of decency.

“So as part of our promise for Fairer, Greener Homes for all, we are announcing a package of policies to make every house – and flat, and bedsit – a proper home.

“Every home should be properly insulated and free from damp and mould. We’d give renters the legal right to demand this from their landlords. No more battling to get things done and no more risk that you’ll get kicked out for insisting your home meets basic standards.

“And we want the amount of rent you pay to be fair, so we’d give councils the power to bring the cost of renting in line with local wages, and make sure housing benefit is enough too. No more lying awake at night worrying your landlord’s going to price you out of your home.

“That’s our promise to everyone – a home that’s warm, affordable and secure.”

The Fairer, Greener Homes Guarantee also includes:

- Investment of £145 billion over ten years to provide grants to retrofit all homes that need it, along with government-backed property-linked finance [3] to make up additional costs
- Give local authorities the power to impose rents controls on the private rental sector ensuring there are affordable homes for key and critical workers in overheated local housing markets
- Plans to increase the stock of social housing by 150,000 homes a year including by bringing empty homes back into use

Co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“The other political parties are simply not living in the real world when it comes to dealing with the housing crisis while reaching the critical net zero target.

“The Conservatives are capitulating to developers while Labour still supports the highly damaging Right to Buy [4] which helped create the crisis.

“This is why it is so crucial that we achieve our aim of Four for 24 – the next generation of Green MPs, our four target candidates, elected at the next election.

“Only by having more Green MPs will we have people in Parliament advocating the solutions to the country’s housing crisis.”

ENDS

Notes

1 The Green Party Autumn Conference takes place at The Brighton Centre, in Brighton, from Friday 6 October to Sunday 8 October

2 The party’s four target candidates are:

- Siân Berry, in Brighton Pavilion

- Carla Denyer, in Bristol Central
- Adrian Ramsay, in Waveney Valley
- Ellie Chowns, in North Herefordshire

3 Low interest government backed loans to pay for retrofit not covered by government grants. These loans will be linked to the property, not the owner at the time that retrofitting took place. Homeowners will need to pay off the loan while they live there and benefit from the reduced energy bills.

Tenants will be able to insist their landlord accesses the loans and has the work carried out. If the landlord will not do this, the local authority can receive the loan and their local authorities carry out the work.

4 <https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/labour-party-supports-right-to-buy-to-extend-wealth-ownership-nandy-says-82109>

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