

Greens call for closure of large venues to protect the NHS amid rising Omicron cases



17 December 2021

With record numbers of Covid cases recorded for the second day running, the Green Party has called for large venues, which currently require Covid passes to be accessed, to be closed, and called for additional safety measures in the hospitality sector.

Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay said,

“As the government’s scientists have said, unless we reduce the spread of Omicron, the NHS risks being overwhelmed not because of people going into hospital but by the large number of NHS staff who themselves have to isolate due to Covid.

“To prevent that happening, large events that currently require Covid passes to be accessed should be closed, to reduce the rate of transmission among large crowds. Those venues required to close, such as large music and sporting venues, should receive appropriate support.

“We welcome the strengthening of social distancing measures to ensure hospitality venues are safe that are being introduced in Wales and we believe these should be extended to England as well. But with a virus that is doubling in less than two days it makes no sense to delay these until after Christmas. The Government must not repeat the mistakes of earlier in the pandemic by once again being too slow to respond.”

Adrian Ramsay also called for financial support for the hospitality sector and criticised the Government’s failure to take responsibility for the impact of its own advice on businesses and the financial impact on individuals. He said:

“By putting responsibility for doing the right thing onto individuals and onto small businesses but without any financial support, the Government is leaving them high and dry.

“The current lack of clarity and lack of a support package is making life impossible for our hospitality sector. And given how many workers are employed without proper sick pay, the lack of financial support for self-isolation amounts to punishing people for following the rules.”

“After nearly two years of chaos in their pandemic response, it’s time the Government took a clear line and ensured that our much-loved hospitality venues get the support they need, including through grants, business rate relief and flexibility on loan repayments, and that people aren’t penalised

for doing the right thing.”

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[Greens celebrate North Shropshire result](#)



17 December 2021

The Green Party candidate in the North Shropshire by-election, Duncan Kerr, has congratulated Helen Morgan on winning the seat, and said that growth in the Green vote share is a result of the hard work of Green councillors in the area.

Duncan Kerr is a Green councillor on Oswestry Town Council, where the Green Party won 12 of the 18 seats in May, taking the council from the Tories.

Councillor Kerr said:

“I congratulate Helen Morgan for winning this seat from the Tories. It is clear from the size of this win that people in this constituency have had their fill of Tory incompetence and neglect as well as years of mismanagement by Conservative controlled Shropshire Council.

“However, when it comes to local politics, the Green Party continues to provide the real alternative to the Conservatives in North Shropshire. From fighting fracking to defending NHS services; opposing cuts to youth services and protecting heritage assets like the Oswestry Hillfort from development, the Green Party has been active in the constituency for a decade.

“Greens took control of the Town Council from the Tories in spectacular style in May, and we also won two of the four seats on Shropshire County Council. Labour did not win a single seat in North Shropshire and the Lib Dems lost the only seat they had.

Green Party co-leader, Carla Denyer, said:

“Nationally, Greens are regularly polling as the third party. We’re going from strength to strength, gaining more and more support in all parts of England and winning seats from all parties. When Greens bring their hard work and positive solutions to an area there’s no such thing as a safe seat.

“It is clear that people care deeply about the climate crisis, inequality and defending public services. As we have seen in Scotland and most recently Germany, when Greens are in power, policies to deliver environmental, social and economic justice are implemented.”

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[Changes to Human Rights Act an attack on democracy say Greens](#)



14 December 2021

Responding to [proposed changes to the Human Rights Act](#) that Dominic Rabb is announcing today, Green Party spokesperson on Democracy and Citizen Engagement, Zack Polanski said:

“This is the latest attack on democracy by this government. Whilst Dominic Raab makes a variety of spurious claims about his proposed changes it’s very different to the reality. This is yet another attempt by a draconian government to whip away rights that help people achieve justice.

“This is the extremist political ideology of Brexiteers like Dominic Rabb. For them, taking back control always meant a power grab; one that seeks to override the vital rights protected by the European Court of Human Rights.”

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[Greens join calls for Prime Minister to resign](#)



9 December 2021

‘Boris Johnson is a threat to public health’, says Green party co-leader

Carla Denyer

Following the Downing Street parties fiasco, Green Party co-leader, Carla Denyer, has joined calls for Boris Johnson to resign.

She said:

"The public have clearly lost trust in this government of corruption, incompetence and buffoonery, and a large majority want Boris Johnson to resign [1]. They're right. We can no longer face the risk of Boris Johnson leading this country through the pandemic.

"The Downing Street parties last Christmas, held while hundreds lay dying from Covid, is just another example of a Tory regime mired in scandal and sleaze.

"This Prime Minister treats the public as fools. He believes that the resignation of the person who speaks on his behalf will somehow exonerate him. But dumping on staff members whose most serious error was in choosing to work for him just won't wash.

"The measures in Plan B are long overdue. Health experts such as the NHS Confederation, and the Green Party, have long called for measures such as working from home where possible and mandatory face mask wearing in public indoor venues. But to announce these measures on the same day as 'partygate' seems no coincidence.

"Johnson has resisted introducing these common sense measures because of pressure from his own backbenchers. Their attempts to block essential public-health measures has exacerbated each of the Covid waves and increased the number of avoidable deaths.

"This disastrous Prime Minister is an embarrassment to this country and has done enough harm to justify resignation five times over by now. Through his own actions and inaction, his loss of public trust, and his willingness to bend to the will of his backbenchers, he is a threat to public health. He must go."

Notes

[1] [Downing Street Christmas party: Majority of UK public say Boris Johnson should resign over video leak row](#)

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Public health approach needed on harmful drug taking say Greens



6 December 2021

- Drug taking needs to be treated as public health issue, not tackled through more punitive measures
- Evidence based policy needed, not Tory and Labour ‘war on drugs’ rhetoric
- Wider causes of problematic drug use need addressing
- Legalised, regulated system of drug control needed to take power from criminals

Greens have accused the government of adopting a punitive approach to tackling drug use [1] and have called instead for harmful drug taking to be treated as a public health issue. They also call for evidence-based policy including education to raise public awareness of the criminal, health, environmental and international issues around the supply of drugs.

Co-leader Carla Denyer, who is a councillor in Bristol where a safe drug consumption room opened last week [2], said:

“Going after drug users with draconian measures won’t address the harm that drug taking can cause. The most harmful drug use is underpinned by poverty, isolation, mental illness, abuse, physical illness and psychological trauma.

“While the Conservatives and Labour attempt to outcompete each other on who can look tougher in a war on drugs, their rhetoric does little to address the tragedy of the lives lost to harmful drug taking every year. This is the sixth drugs strategy in 23 years, and it follows a now familiar pattern of failure.

“Greens would follow a public health approach which tackles the wider causes of problematic drug use while being honest in communication with the public. We also need a policy that prevents profiteering from the supply of drugs. Greens favour a legalised, regulated system of drug control based on the specific risks posed to the individual, to society and to the environment. This is how to take power away from unscrupulous criminals.

“In Bristol, Green councillors have lobbied for years [3] for the introduction of a safer drug consumption room – a measure that would save lives. Such a room opened in Bristol last week on a trial basis, supervised

by staff who are trained to treat an overdose. This progressive approach, which is in operation in many other countries, has been shown to save lives and reduce health, social and crime problems associated with street drug use [4].”

Notes

[1] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-59540781>

[2] <https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/britains-first-drug-consumption-space-6289925>

[3] <https://www.bristol247.com/news-and-features/news/call-life-saving-drugs-consumption-room-bristol/>

[4] <https://transformdrugs.org/drug-policy/uk-drug-policy/overdose-prevention-centres>

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