

Second runway at Gatwick would be “disaster for the climate”, Green Party warns



9 September 2021

- **Party has calculated expansion could result in an extra 1.5 million tonnes of carbon each year**

The Green Party has warned a second runway at Gatwick would be a disaster for the climate and could result in an extra 1.5 million tonnes of carbon emitted each year [1], ahead of a public consultation on the airport's expansion plans.

Councillors and members from the South East Green Party met with a former Gatwick-based pilot Todd Smith when they launched their campaign against the plans on the eve of the consultation on Wednesday.

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

“Converting Gatwick's emergency runway to support even more flights is completely incompatible with the UK's climate targets. The Government should be looking to ways of driving down aviation demand, not facilitating it.

“More flights at Gatwick will cause more noise, pollution and road congestion and undermine what few efforts there are to put us on the path to net zero emissions.”

Surrey Green Party Councillor Jonathan Essex has calculated that the planned expansion at Gatwick will increase emissions by more than 1.5 million tonnes of carbon a year.

Councillor Essex said:

“Converting Gatwick's emergency runway to support even more flights would be a disaster for the climate. The fact that these plans have even been put forward implies that the government just reflects business interests rather than providing leadership on the climate.

“We need a Green New Deal plan to decarbonise every home and journey locally, not a further increase in the noise, pollution, congestion and pressures of Gatwick, whose climate impact already dwarfs that of its surrounding area.”

Todd Smith, 32, former Gatwick-based pilot and co-founder of environmental group Safe Landing [2], said:

“Airport expansion at Gatwick or any other UK airport is in direct conflict with the need for climate leadership and contradicts the advice from the

government's independent Climate Change Committee.

"It's about time we had a grown up conversation regarding aviation's role in this emergency and how we can support highly skilled workers' transition towards the essential low carbon jobs of the future."

ENDS

Notes

1

This is calculated by applying the increase in carbon emissions set out by the UK Department for Transport (DfT) for 2016 up to 2028 for the proposed second runway using Gatwick Airport Ltd (GAL) and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) figures.

- Estimate of 4.5 million tonnes CO2 from Gatwick in 2016 (DfT (2017) UK Aviation Forecasts.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878705/uk-aviation-forecasts-2017.pdf (p146)
- Increase for 2017 based on CAA data to 283,000 Air Transport Movements from Gatwick
(https://www.caa.co.uk/uploadedFiles/CAA/Content/Standard_Content/Data_and_analysis/Datasets/Airport_stats/Airport_data_2017_annual/Table_03_1_Aircraft_Movements.pdf)
- Applying uplift from 2017 to 2028 of 32% calculated by GAL during the Landing and Take-off Cycle (LTO) cycle of using the Northern emergency runway as a second runway
<https://www.gatwickairport.com/globalassets/business-community/growing-gatwick/master-plan-2019/gatwick-master-plan-2019.pdf> (Figure 5.8).

2

Safe Landing is a group of eco-conscious aviation workers campaigning for long term sustainable jobs and a sector governed by the realities of climate science: <https://safe-landing.org/>

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Government “unprincipled and short-sighted” for sacrificing climate

[commitments in Australia trade deal](#)



8 September 2021

The Green Party has criticised the government after it was reported that ministers have sacrificed Paris climate agreement conditions in its trade deal with Australia. [1]

Green Party peer Natalie Bennett said:

“Sacrificing climate commitments to try to make up for the disastrous trade impacts of Brexit shows just how unprincipled and dangerously short-sighted this government is.

“The Paris agreement’s commitment to aim for below 1.5 degrees temperature rise is there to protect the future of everybody on the planet right now and future generations. This grubby trade deal is nothing more than a blatant cover-up for the mess Boris Johnson has left the UK to gain power for himself.

“As chair of COP26, the world expects the UK to be stringent in holding up existing climate commitments and energetic in pushing for even more. Instead, all we see is self-serving games being played, from a group of politicians who are willing to put all of our futures’ at risk for short-term and extremely limited financial and political gain.”

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://news.sky.com/story/exclusive-ministers-bowed-to-pressure-to-drop-key-climate-commitments-for-uk-trade-deal-with-australia-12401988>

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[Green Party slams government over wasted Green homes opportunity](#)



8 September 2021

The Green Party has condemned the government's mismanagement of the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme, after a National Audit Office report identified it has wildly underdelivered on new energy efficiency home installations and creation of Green jobs.

Deputy party leader Amelia Womack said: "News that the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme has been a failure comes as no surprise and yet again demonstrates the government's total lack of commitment to substantive action on the climate crisis.

"Decarbonising home heating is a key part of reaching net zero – even the government has managed to identify that. But here we have a scheme that was supposed to contribute to that goal while also delivering energy savings for hundreds of thousands of households and more than eighty thousand jobs, and it's been totally mismanaged.

"A wasted opportunity doesn't even begin to cover it!"

Delays by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy in issuing vouchers to homeowners and paying installers were also highlighted in the report.

Green Party Green New Deal spokesperson Zoe Nicholson said: "People are really on board with taking steps that will help reach net zero so it's so disappointing that this mish mash of schemes hasn't been easy for householders to engage with.

"For a genuinely Green recovery from Covid, local authorities need to be given the proper funding and support to play a significant role in decarbonisation – making it a priority in both the public and private sectors."

ENDS

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[Green Party proposes to abolish not increase national insurance to fund social care](#)

6 September 2021

- Greens call to replace national insurance with single unified income tax to reduce loopholes and raise £24 billion to help fund social care

The Green Party has condemned the Chancellor's proposal to increase tax on working people and called for national insurance to be scrapped entirely in favour of a single unified income tax which could raise an additional £24 billion to fund social care.

Molly Scott Cato, Green Party economy and finance spokesperson, said:

"Increasing national insurance will simply force working people to pay more while protecting the more well off in society, whose wealth is wrapped up in property and other investments.

"The Green Party proposes a single tax so that all incomes, including rental and investment income, are taxed at the same rate. We would be prepared to increase income tax until it reaches a level comparable with other economies that have comprehensive health and care systems. [1]

"Our single tax would remove the unjust loophole whereby earnings above £50,000 are charged only 2%. These changes together would bring an additional £24 billion into the Exchequer." [2]

Green Party acting leader Sian Berry said:

"A decent, dignified social care system without anxiety or unfairness is long overdue, and we need new ideas.

"But, rather than taking a penny-pinching approach, the Chancellor should build a social care system fit for everyone's needs and which creates good new jobs paying a decent wage. We should be following the example of post-war Chancellors who built our health system despite a crisis in the public finances.

"It's time for all parties to work together in order to build a social care system that is free for everyone to use at the point of service, and which will also make sure carers are paid a decent wage for their hard work."

ENDS

Notes

1

See table 1:

https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/8625f8e5-en/1/3/1/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/8625f8e5-en&_csp_=10eecbf76519867b3d14d98d90e8aff0&itemIG0=oecd&itemContentType=book#figure-d1e280

2

Increasing additional rate of employees National Insurance from 2% to 12% (same as standard rate) would raise around £11bn per year for the treasury

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/11-12-2017-employees-national-insurance-12-2017.pdf

[tachment_data/file/737597/Dec_17_Main_Reliefs_Final.pdf](https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/just-tax)

According to figures from the Institute for Public Policy Research, taxing income from assets in the same way as income from work could gain £15bn per year by 2025:

<https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/just-tax>

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total (£bn)	
Tax capital gains at the same rates as income	0	+8	+10	+9	+9	+36	
Remove the annual exempt amount	0	+4	+4	+4	+4	+15	
Remove entrepreneur's relief	0	+2	+3	+2	+2	+9	
Introduce an allowance							
	RRA based on bond yields	0	-5	-5	-6	-6	-22
	Indexation allowance	0	-3	-3	-4	-4	-14
Remove death relief	0	+1	+1	+1	+1	+5	

Entrepreneurs' relief has now [largely been reduced by the government](#), so a realistic increase would be £13bn.

This means, coupled with the increased rate, the total extra revenue would be around £24bn per year.

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[Greens Urge Covid Caution Ahead of Return to School](#)



31 August 2021

As the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF call on educational settings to be made safer for students and staff [1], the Green Party is demanding the government follow international, scientific advice and ensure effective classroom ventilation, social distancing and, in addition, offer vaccinations to all 12-15 year olds in schools.

Vix Lowthion, Green Party education spokesperson and a secondary school teacher on the Isle of Wight, said:

“The government propaganda machine is being rolled out in an effort to reassure parents that schools are safe. But promising students and families

that they can look forward to a more normal year by merely taking regular voluntary COVID-19 lateral flow tests is extremely naive, as teaching unions have rightly highlighted [2].

“The reality is, that in the UK infection rates are highest among those under the age of 30. Back in June, Public Health England demonstrated outbreaks of the Delta variant in schools exceeded those in any other setting, and that cases among secondary school children were the highest across all age groups.

“As students return to educational settings after a 6 week break, we must see proper ventilation, social distancing, face coverings worn in busy areas and the offer of vaccinations for older school children. Yet the best our Education Secretary Gavin Williamson can do is brandish false and hollow reassurances about a return to normality, and put the onus on parents and children to ‘not throw caution to the wind’ [3].”

With Covid-19 cases and deaths climbing in many parts of England, and evidence suggesting protection offered by Covid vaccines may be waning [4], the Green Party is also repeating calls for the mandatory wearing of face coverings on public transport and in shops, and adequate financial support for those who need to self isolate.

Peter Cranie, Green Party Health, Social Care and Public Health spokesperson, said:

“The government has accepted, as a price worth paying, Covid-19 infection rates around 30 times higher than this time last year [5] and an average 100 deaths a day. This compares to just 26 deaths in New Zealand, over the whole course of the pandemic.

“Instead of the childish reluctance of some Tory backbenchers to wear masks and maintain social distance, we need a responsible and compassionate approach from government. That means mandatory wearing of face coverings on public transport and in shops and adequate financial support for those who need to self isolate.”

“The Covid-19 pandemic is an ongoing health emergency. We must approach this autumn with extreme caution.”

Notes

[1]

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/aug/30/call-for-schools-across-europe-to-stay-open-and-be-made-safer-covid>

[2]

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2021/aug/26/unions-criticise-english-schools-more-normal-year-campaign-as-naive>

[3]

<https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/gavin-williamson-warns-pupils-not-to-get-carried-away-ahead-of-schools-return/>

[4]

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/health/medical/coronavirus-vaccine-protection-waning-in-those-first-jabbed-study-suggests/ar-AANixrN>

[5] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-58281664>

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