

# Greens disappointed with High Court ruling on £27bn road building programme

26 July 2021

The Green Party has expressed its disappointment with the High Court's ruling on a legal challenge to the government's £27bn Second Roads Investment Strategy (RIS2). [1]

Caroline Russell, Green Party transport and healthy streets spokesperson, said:

“It’s very disappointing that the High Court has not upheld the legal challenge to the £27bn road building programme, but we continue to urge the government to halt this emissions busting policy immediately and will hold it to account on making sure its transport policy is consistent with its legally-binding climate commitments.

“There is simply no room for a £27bn road building programme in a climate emergency. It is inexcusable that this Conservative government wants to pave the way for more cars on the road, with more climate emissions, more congestion and more pollution, making life worse for communities across the country.

“In this last week we’ve seen terrible extreme rainfall events across the world, including flash floods in London. When is this government going to take the action that is needed and stop forcing through environmentally-damaging new roads while paying lip service to its role as chair of COP26?”

ENDS

## **Notes**

1

<https://transportactionnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Court-protects-stability-of-roads-programme-over-climate-RIS2-decision-press-release.pdf>

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# Lack of pay rise for NHS staff “an absolute insult”, say Greens

21 July 2021

- **Amelia Womack: “For the government to once again delay any pay rise at all after a decade of falling pay is disgraceful”**

The lack of any pay rise for NHS staff in the government’s announcement today is “an absolute insult” to those who have risked their lives throughout the Covid pandemic, the Green Party has said. [1]

It had been widely reported that the government was due to announce an inadequate 3% rise for NHS staff in an address to the House of Commons today. But health minister Helen Whately made no such offer during a statement on the NHS this afternoon.

According to research by *London Economics*, most NHS staff on Agenda for Change [2] contracts to which the expected offer would have applied, have seen their pay fall by between 10% and 15% in real terms since 2010 [3]. The 3% proposal that had been reported was just 0.6% above the rate of inflation, and would have failed to reverse the trend of stagnating pay in the NHS [4].

Unions and grassroots campaigners are demanding pay offers of between 12% and 15%, to restore pay levels and address the understaffing crisis. In March the Green Party of England & Wales became the largest political party in the UK to support a 15% pay offer for Agenda for Change staff, by passing a motion at its 2021 Spring Conference. [5]

Green Party Deputy Leader Amelia Womack said:

“NHS workers have just worked the hardest year of their lives in incredibly difficult conditions. The reported 3% was nowhere near adequate, but for the government to once again delay any pay rise at all after a decade of falling pay is disgraceful.

“The NHS’ amazing staff have kept this country going throughout the pandemic, overcoming chronic understaffing and underfunding in order to provide critical care. The government’s lack of announcement today is an absolute insult for the same key workers they clapped on their doorsteps just months ago.”

Green Party Health spokesperson, Peter Cranie said:

“We face a shortage of at least 84,000 key NHS staff in England, and we should be making every effort to attract people to health professions. Instead, this government has shown disdain for key health workers and exacerbated the threats posed by underfunding and understaffing.”

Jordan Rivera, an Occupational Therapist at Homerton Hospital in London, UNISON workplace representative and grassroots campaigner, said:

"After months of delays, leaving us to wait for a pay offer over the summer holidays is simply cruel. Poor pay is contributing massively to short staffing and now is the time for the government to show us that we are valued. The public recognise the role we've played in helping to fight covid over the last year, often at a huge cost to ourselves, and they know that we deserve a decent pay rise. Why doesn't the government realise this?"

The news comes amid a recruitment crisis in the NHS, which faces a shortfall of 84,000 staff in England according to the King's Fund[6]. The UK currently ranks 27th out of 36 OECD countries for the number of physicians per head of the population[7].

ENDS

## Notes

1

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/breaking-tories-scrap-nhs-pay-24584579>

2

Agenda for Change is the NHS pay scale and employee grade system. Introduced in 2004, it covers more than one million staff. Staff on Agenda for Change contracts include nurses, occupational therapists, and other directly employed NHS staff. It does not cover doctors, dentists, or senior manager roles.

3

'The Net Exchequer Impact of Increasing Pay for Agenda for Change Staff' (18th January 2021), London Economics. [The Net Exchequer Impact of Increasing Pay for Agenda for Change Staff | London Economics](#).

4

'Consumer price inflation, UK: June 2021' (14th July 2021), Office for National Statistics. [Consumer price inflation, UK – Office for National Statistics](#)

5

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2021/03/06/green-party-supports-calls-for-15-pay-rise-for-nhs-workers/>

6

'NHS workforce: our position' (26th February 2021), The King's Fund. NHS workforce: our position | <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/positions/nhs-workforce>

'Global Health Indicators', World Health Organisation. Medical doctors (per 10 000 population)  
[https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/medical-doctors-\(per-10-000-population\)](https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/medical-doctors-(per-10-000-population))

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## **Greens call on government to match EU food and farming standards to end Northern Ireland Protocol conflict**



21 July 2021

- **Party repeats call for return to Customs Union**

The Green Party has rejected Lord Frost's proposals to seek a major renegotiation of the Brexit deal he and Boris Johnson signed up to just 18 months ago, and on the basis of which they won the 2019 general election.

Molly Scott Cato, Green Party economics spokesperson and former MEP, said:

"If the Northern Ireland protocol is unworkable then it is down to the people who negotiated it on behalf of the UK – Boris Johnson and his chief negotiator Lord Frost.

"There is a simple solution here which could massively reduce the bureaucracy at the border. The government should open negotiations to agree a comprehensive treaty to guarantee that we will maintain high, EU standards of animal and food safety, reducing the need for many checks.

"The Green Party also supports the UK rejoining the customs union, which would go even further to ease the need for border checks at the Irish border as well as reducing the burden of paperwork for UK businesses that export to the EU.

"It's clear that the Prime Minister never intended to keep the deal he agreed with the EU. He signed up to the protocol as a political convenience to ensure he won an election and gained power for himself.

"He has repeatedly demonstrated recklessness over the hard-won peace in Northern Ireland in spite of the warnings of former prime ministers and those

who negotiated the Good Friday Agreement.

"Trying to change the international treaty we agreed just 18 months ago portrays 'Global Britain' as a country that cannot be trusted and diminishes our international reputation that is so vital both in negotiating trade deals and achieving a successful outcome from the Glasgow climate talks."

ENDS

#### Notes

1

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-57911148>

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## **Green Party calls for Cobra meeting as Met Office issues first ever extreme heat warning for UK**



19 July 2021

- **Amelia Womack: "The government needs to do whatever it takes to protect its citizens and ensure extreme heat is properly managed"**

The Green Party has called on the UK government to set up an emergency Cobra meeting after the Met Office issues the first ever extreme heat warning for the UK. [1]

An amber warning is currently in place for a large part of Wales, all of south-west England and parts of southern and central England.

Green Party deputy leader Amelia Womack said:

"From the devastating floods in Europe to the heat wave in the US and Canada that has also killed hundreds of people, climate change is here and is impacting us all.

"This is the first time the UK has ever seen a warning for extreme heat. It is time this government realised the full extent of how the climate and ecological emergencies will affect our lives and act with the urgency this demands

“This is the reality of how we have to live now. The government needs to do whatever it takes to ensure citizens are protected from the potentially fatal health impacts of extreme heat.

“A Cobra meeting could establish guidelines for action and ensure that funding is available for local authorities to introduce measures to save lives, such as the cooling centres recently set up in Canada.

“Parliament declared a climate emergency more than two years ago [2], yet we have seen next to no action. This has to be the wake up call to make sure the government does what it needs to.

“Every day more opportunities are missed as the clock ticks down to COP26 in Glasgow this year, the most important climate summit ever.

“A Cobra emergency meeting in the wake of the news from the Met Office today would focus this government’s minds on addressing this issue and doing what it takes to look after UK citizens.”

ENDS

#### Notes

1

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jul/19/met-office-issues-first-ever-extreme-heat-warning-uk>

2

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48126677>

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## **Thousands sign Green Party petition urging government to keep masks mandatory**



16 July 2021

- Peter Cranie: “This petition is another clear call to the government not to scrap the regulations which have undoubtedly helped to keep people safe throughout this pandemic”

Thousands of people have signed a Green Party petition urging the government to keep mask wearing mandatory in shops and on public transport after July 19. [1]

In less than a week more than 10,000 people have signed the petition, telling the government to halt its plans to discard the legal enforcement of the protection measure. [2]

Green Party health spokesperson Peter Cranie said:

“This government’s reckless plans to remove the legal obligation to wear a mask in order to protect others from this deadly disease is nothing more than a drive from the right wing of the Conservative Party to attack any sort of social solidarity.

“In reality, this move will put thousands of people at higher risk of catching Covid. The simple act of wearing a mask not only reduces that risk, but shows that we are still all in this together.”

In Scotland, restrictions are also being lifted on Monday, but the government has said the mandatory use of face coverings will remain in place due to spread of the Delta variant. [3]

Cranie said:

“We know that the majority of people support wearing masks. Recent polling showed 70% of people supported masks being compulsory in shops and on public transport. [4]

“This petition is another clear call to the government not to scrap the regulations which have undoubtedly kept people safer throughout this pandemic.

“The vaccines do offer protection, but as we have seen we are not out of the woods yet. The government needs to follow the science and continue to provide clear guidance on continuing to wear masks on public transport and in public spaces.”

ENDS

## Notes

1

<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/lets-keep-our-masks-on/>

2

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2021/07/12/masks-must-remain-mandatory-to-keep-public-safe,-says-green-party/>

3

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-57820417>

[https://yougov.co.uk/topics/health/survey-results/daily/2021/07/05/0275c/1?utm\\_source=twitter&utm\\_medium=daily\\_questions&utm\\_campaign=question\\_1](https://yougov.co.uk/topics/health/survey-results/daily/2021/07/05/0275c/1?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=daily_questions&utm_campaign=question_1)

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