

[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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[Small Business Saturday: The ‘backbone of our local economy’ needs support in greening operations and improving employee welfare](#)



6 December 2021

Today, Small Business Saturday, the Green Party is calling on both national and local government to implement a series of measures to help small and independent businesses and social enterprises green their operations, improve employee welfare and make it easier for people to ‘shop local’ [1].

Green Party co-leader, Adrian Ramsay, said:

“Small and independent businesses and enterprises are the backbone of our local economy. They are vital for providing jobs and keeping money circulating in the local area. They also make our towns and cities diverse, distinctive and unique.

“We know many small businesses are committed to becoming more sustainable and to improving the welfare of their employees, but it is often made difficult and expensive for them to do so. That’s why, this Small Business Saturday, Greens are calling on the government and local councils to introduce a series of measures to support small businesses do the right thing.”

“The Green Party has long championed business rates reform and extending and expanding business rates relief. We are proud to be the party of small business; we want to see them thrive, and provided support to do so.”

ENDS

Notes

[1] List of measures being proposed by the Green Party:

In addition to our on-going demands to reform business rates and extend and reform business rates to advantage small businesses and enterprises, we are

calling for a series of measures to help small businesses green their operations and improve employee welfare:

1. No small business should pay higher business rates as a result of greening their business. The government must incentivise rather than penalise small businesses that are tackling their carbon emissions and making their operations more sustainable. There should be a clear list of items/actions that businesses can implement without fear of increasing their business rates including, but not limited to, fitting solar panels and insulation, introducing recycling facilities or schemes, building bike sheds and putting in employee showers and changing rooms.
2. Small business should be supported to improve employee wellbeing. Government must help businesses improve the wellbeing of their employees. Measures should include exempting all childcare providers in England from business rates, in line with Scotland and Wales; increasing employment allowance to at least £5000 to help the smallest employers; and ensuring no business is penalised by higher business rates when they implement Covid-safe measures such as ventilation systems.
3. Reform VAT to support small businesses. The VAT holiday until 2022 is a welcome break for small businesses but the government must use the time until this holiday to review our VAT system so that it differentially supports smaller shops and businesses compared to larger and online businesses.
4. Creation of Virtual High Streets. Councils should work with small and independent businesses and help create 'Virtual High Streets' so residents within a district can use an online portal to enable them to buy from participating local shops and have items delivered on the same or next day. Such schemes are operating in both Brighton and Lewes where Greens are in power. In Herefordshire, Green councillors have worked with local businesses to enable a prepaid card loaded with £15 to spend with local businesses – a great way to encourage people to shop local.

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