

Opposition parties meet Michel Barnier



25 October 2018

Leading figures from opposition parties will meet Michel Barnier in Brussels today [Thursday] to say the UK must remain within the Single Market and the Customs Union.

The campaign to resolve Brexit through a People's Vote will also be discussed. The Green Party, Liberal Democrats, the SNP and Plaid Cymru have all said they would support the public having a say on the outcome of the Brexit negotiations in a vote in the House of Commons.

Last weekend saw hundreds of thousands of people march in London for the People's Vote and polling shows the option is increasingly the preferred choice across the UK.

The group will open a cross-party line of communication to the European Commission, so that officials are aware of Parliamentary progress made on securing the People's Vote, while continuing to make the case for the UK to stay within the Single Market and the Customs Union.

Those attending the meeting with Barnier will be: Molly Scott Cato, Green Party MEP for the South West of England and Gibraltar, Vince Cable, Leader of the Liberal Democrats, Ian Blackford, Westminster Leader of the SNP and Liz Saville Roberts, Westminster Leader of Plaid Cymru.

Molly Scott Cato said:

"There is now Parliamentary paralysis on Brexit. The Chequers plan is dead, but neither is there support for alternative versions of Brexit being driven by a Brexit syndicate of far-right think tanks.

"It is clear the only way out of this deadlock is to hand the process back to the people. Last weekend 700,000 people marched in support of the People's Vote; more than the combined membership of the Tories and Labour. The momentum behind this idea can no longer be ignored; it now looks unstoppable."

Vince Cable said:

"Our 'unholy alliance' has provided a sensible counterpoint to the hard-line Brexiteers who have pushed the Conservatives and Labour's frontbench into senseless and fudged positions. It is vital that Michel Barnier and the European Commission know that there is another view in Parliament, one that has cross-party support and that can get the EU and the UK out of this mess.

"I will also tell Michel Barnier that there are also brave Conservative and Labour rebels involved in leading this fight to give the people a final say. As a result, there is now tremendous Parliamentary and public pressure to hold that vote."

Liz Saville Roberts said:

"Plaid Cymru will not stand by and allow the British Government, along with their collaborators in the Labour party, to drag Wales out of the Single Market and Customs Union. Negotiations between the Prime Minister and Michel Barnier have reached another embarrassing stalemate. The only realistic option available to us is to extend Article 50 and take the Withdrawal Agreement to a People's Vote.

"Leaving the key European economic frameworks will wipe £5 billion off the Welsh economy. In making the case for a People's Vote, I will impress upon the Chief EU Negotiator the full gravity of the impact of Brexit on Wales. The British Government has never had Wales's best interest at heart."

Ian Blackford said:

"While the UK Government clearly still has no plan to break the Brexit impasse, and Labour fail to act as an effective opposition, it has been left to the 'unofficial opposition' to speak up for a deal that would protect jobs and livelihoods. I am grateful to Mr Barnier for meeting with us.

"Any Brexit deal that falls short of staying in the Single Market and the Customs Union will not get through Parliament. It's time for Theresa May to drop the jargon, quit playing games and act to protect our economic future."

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[Greens: Misogyny hate crime](#)

implementation must be community led



23 October 2018

Greens: Misogyny hate crime implementation must be community led

In response to the findings of the Women and Equalities Committee on the harassment that women and girls face on the street [1], Green Party of England and Wales deputy leader Amelia Womack stated that efforts to make misogyny a hate crime must be implemented at the community level.

Womack said:

“The #metoo movement has underlined our need for a major culture shift, to change the way women are treated in our society. If the Government is to classify misogyny as a hate crime, it is critical that it is implemented at the local level so that citizens know how to tackle sexism within their own communities.”

[1] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-45942447>

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Greens: Release of anti-fracking activists a victory for right to

protest



17 October 2018

The Green Party has responded to news three anti-fracking activists have had custodial sentences reduced to conditional discharges by the Court of Appeal today [1].

Simon Roscoe Blevins, Richard Roberts, and Richard Loizou were jailed in September for protesting fracking at Cuadrilla's Preston New Road site in Lancashire in July last year.

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

"The release of three anti-fracking heroes from jail is a victory for peaceful protest. These sentences were not only heavy handed and wrong, they were part of a nationwide clamp down on dissent making it harder and harder for campaigners to stand up against climate destruction.

"The Green Party stands shoulder to shoulder with Richard, Richard and Roscoe as they celebrate their freedom today. The anti-fracking movement is stronger than ever. We will not give up this fight until Britain is free of this dirty and destructive industry.

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/oct/17/court-quashes-excessive-sentences-of-fracking-protesters>

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Greens: Start of fracking puts sledgehammer through climate targets



15 October 2018

The Green Party has responded to news Cuadrilla has started fracking at its site in Preston New Road, Lancashire, today (Monday 15 October). The move marks the first fracking to take place in Britain in seven years [1].

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, said the start of fracking on the first day of the Conservative's Green GB Week [2], and just days after the UN's IPCC report [3], revealed the "rank hypocrisy" of a Government which has "backed frackers to put a sledgehammer through our climate targets".

Bartley said:

"The Government is backing frackers to put a sledgehammer through our climate targets. Just days after the UN warned we have 12 years to face climate catastrophe fracking has started in Britain for the first time in seven years. Marking the start of Green GB Week with the start of fracking is rank hypocrisy.

"This proves just how deeply the filth of fossil fuels runs through our political establishment. The Government has forced fracking on Lancashire after the community said no and now drilling has started before all their concerns have been fully heard or answered.

"Public support for fracking is in freefall and the anti-fracking movement will continue to go from strength to strength. To tackle the scale of climate breakdown ministers must commit to keeping fossil fuels in the ground where they belong, and investing instead in a renewable revolution for the future."

Notes:

1. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-fracking/gas-fracking-to-start-in-england-next-week-after-seven-year-halt-idUSKCN1MF0WK>

2.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/landmark-week-of-action-to-celebrate-clean-growth>

3.
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-fracking/gas-fracking-to-start-in-england-next-week-after-seven-year-halt-idUSKCN1MF0WK>

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[Greens: Fracking ruling opens new fossil fuel frontier](#)



12 October 2018

The Green Party has responded to a High Court ruling which has rejected an injunction which would stop fracking taking place at Cuadrilla's site in Preston New Road, Lancashire. [1]

Local resident Bob Dennett had applied for the injunction over emergency planning procedures at the site.

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, joined campaigners at the court today and said the ruling was "bitterly disappointing" but that the anti-fracking movement is still "stronger than ever".

Bartley said:

"A new fossil fuel frontier has been opened in Britain. In the same week the UN warned we have little more than a decade to tackle climate change, this

ruling has paved the way for the first fracking in seven years.

“To stand any chance of hitting climate targets we must keep all fossil fuels in the ground where they belong. Fracking is a dirty, dangerous industry and I stand shoulder to shoulder with the brave residents standing up for the safety of their community today.

“We are deeply disappointed by this ruling, but the anti-fracking movement is stronger than ever and we will not give up this fight until Britain is frack free. It’s time the Government ditched its reckless dash for gas and invested instead in a renewable revolution of solar, wind and tidal power.” [2]

Notes:

1. https://twitter.com/adamvaughan_uk/status/1050707549396357120
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-45775309>

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