

Green Party urges local authorities to take in fair share of child refugees



17 August 2021

In response to the crisis in Afghanistan, the Green Party has written to every local authority in England to urge them to join forces and volunteer to take in more child refugees.

Benali Hamdache, Green Party migration and refugee support spokesperson, has sent letters to the leaders of every council, to remind them of the woeful provision currently provided to child refugees. [1]

It calls on the local authorities to work together in order to take their fair share of children as people flee the Taliban in Afghanistan, as well as those seeking refuge from other parts of the world.

Hamdache said:

“We have all looked on in horror as the Taliban advanced across Afghanistan, leaving millions of people trying to flee violence and persecution.

“Councils in England can make a huge difference to the lives of some of these people. Unfortunately, the provision for child refugees in this country is already woefully inadequate, with young people being left in unsuitable locations, often without the support they need. [2]

“If we want to be able to help those in Afghanistan who deserve a better future, then we need to sort out the crisis already in this country and get local authorities to take their fair share of child refugees.”

In the letter, Hamdache has asked each local authority if they:

- Are currently supporting the required 0.07% of UASC children as a portion of their child population?
- Plans to participate in the National Transfer Scheme rota and if so, when are they next expecting to take more UASCs?
- Will commit to supporting the large numbers of UASCs currently in hotels in Kent and Brighton & Hove waiting for local authorities to offer them a placement?

Hamdache has also urged councils to join the Green Party’s call on the UK government to provide more funds to local authorities to support refugee children.

Hamdache said:

“It’s also time for the government to step up and deliver on the obligations it has to help those around the world who need it. It needs to create

specific funding to support councils help those in need.”

Councillor Hannah Clare, Brighton and Hove’s Lead Councillor for Childrens’ Services, said:

“It is clear that the Government’s inability to act and introduce a mandatory rota for local authorities has failed. Many councils across England are simply looking the other way and the Government is allowing them to do so. As councils, we must do better.

“Right now in Brighton and Hove and in Kent there are young people being placed in a hotel by the Home Office waiting for councils to offer them a secure, permanent home. And the refugee crisis we face will only get worse. Councils must act now to provide a place for these vulnerable children.”

ENDS

Notes

1

A full version of the letter [can be seen here](#)

2

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/home-office-sends-lone-child-migrants-to-hotels-f5nlr23rd>

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[Green Party urges UK government to support Afghan refugees as Taliban enter Kabul](#)



15 August 2021

The Green Party has urged the UK government to do all it can to support Afghan refugees fleeing the Taliban advance and to urge the international community, including at the UN Security Council, to hold the Taliban to standards of international and humanitarian law as a condition of future cooperation.

Carne Ross, Green Party global solidarity spokesperson, said:

“The Taliban’s advance in Afghanistan is nothing short of a tragedy. Millions of people are now left with the prospect of fleeing their homes to avoid violence and persecution. The international community has a responsibility to do all it can to offer these people refuge and protection.

“After 20 years of being in Afghanistan, the UK has a major and continuing responsibility to support the Afghan people. It is clear that by leaving without a peace deal being agreed, we have broken the promises we made to Afghan citizens, offering them a brighter future based on human rights and the rule of law.

“Through its shameful cut in aid to the country at the same time as withdrawing military support [1], the UK government has reneged on the promises it made to Afghans to stay and help build a safe and functioning country.

“At some point, a period of reflection will be required in the West about how 20 years of an international presence in Afghanistan has resulted in this disaster. But for now, the priority has to be ensuring we offer protection to those who need it most.

“We have a duty to those who worked with UK forces in Afghanistan and we’ve got a duty to help support refugees and the countries on the border with Afghanistan.

“At the same time, the international community must now make it clear that the Taliban will be held responsible for any war crimes or human rights abuses committed in the current violence, and will be held to international standards to protect human rights if they’re going to have constructive relations with the rest of the world.”

Notes

1

<https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/uk-cuts-direct-aid-to-afghanistan-by-78-at-same-time-as-withdrawing-military-support-amid-taliban-advance-1117084>

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[Catch-up funds should be given to GCSE students for further studies and](#)

resources, say Greens



12 August 2021

The Green Party has called on the government to provide students who received their GCSE results today with the “catch up” funds promised to support them in further study or finding jobs now they have finished school.

Last month, the government offered funding for schools to provide “catch up” sessions over the summer for students who had missed time at school due to the pandemic. However, it has been reported that many schools did not offer the extra provision due to concerns over the wellbeing of staff and students. [1]

Today, the Green Party has congratulated all those students across England and Wales who will receive their GCSE grades, but also called on the government to provide the unused funding to help young people in the next stage of their lives.

Vix Lowthion, Green Party Lifelong Education Spokesperson and a teacher on the Isle of Wight, said:

“This year group, many of whom have missed more than six months of teaching time for these GCSEs, deserve every ounce of admiration and compassion we can offer for persevering with their studies in the middle of a pandemic.

“It is without doubt that this government has seriously failed these young people. It seems that they learned absolutely nothing from the chaos of the previous year, and have simply allowed these students to be left without the proper resources and teaching time they deserve.

“To recompense these students for the time they have missed due to the government’s mishandling of the pandemic, Gavin Williamson should now provide the unused catch-up funds to these students now to help facilitate further study or resources for their next step in life.

“We owe these students at least this much after all the challenges they have faced at such an important time.”

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2021/jul/13/schools-in-england-to-esche-w-summer-catch-up-and-put-health-first>

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[Greens call for clarity over 2022 exams as students receive A level results](#)



10 August 2021

STATEMENT: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vix Lowthion: “This year has been one of the hardest for students ever, and so every single person receiving their A Level results today deserves praise and respect for their achievements”

The Green Party has called on the UK and Welsh governments to issue clear guidance on exam measures for next year to avoid the chaos of the last two years as students received their A level results today [Tuesday 10 August].

Vix Lowthion, Green Party lifelong education spokesperson and a teacher who was with her students as they got their results this morning, said

“This year has been one of the hardest for students ever, and so every single person receiving their A Level results today deserves praise and respect for their achievements.

“Despite facing huge uncertainty over exams, lost learning time and not being protected from Covid, young people up and down the country have shown the sort of drive and resilience which should set an example for us all.

“The government faces serious questions over just how chaotic the last two years have been for schools and college, and we need to hear from Gavin Williamson immediately about exam measures for next summer so that the class of 2022 do not face the same hardships as the two previous years.”

Wales Green Party leader Anthony Slaughter said:

“Students in Wales have had to endure one of the toughest 12 months imaginable, yet the Labour government here is still yet to offer any semblance of a plan for next year

“While we should praise all of our A level students for what they have achieved while coping in a pandemic this last year, let that not distract us from the fact that the government here needs to set out how no other year groups are going to suffer in a similar way.

“Teachers have also had to deal with an enormous amount of extra stress in being solely responsible for students’ grades, and so we fully support union calls for clarity over next year’s exams for their benefit also.”

ENDS

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[Green Party responds to latest IPCC report](#)



9 August 2021

The Green Party has responded to the sixth report from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Deputy leader Amelia Womack said:

“From floods and fires to droughts and rising sea levels, we are already living in a changed climate and we now have a very small window of opportunity to reverse these effects through bold and urgent action.

“If we act today, it will still take 20-30 years for the climate to stabilise again and yet all we’re hearing from government is pledges on targets with a big gap where the policies should be to meet them.

“This is just 1.1 degrees of warning – thinking 1.5 or 2 degrees is acceptable simply ignores the reality of the issue and demonstrates clearly that the government doesn’t appreciate we are in a crisis here in the UK and around the globe, and as a result is failing to manage the risks.

“We need action not words and a global carbon tax is the most powerful way of rapidly eliminating fossil fuels from our economies. To avoid a negative impact on those on lower incomes it should be combined with significant investment in public transport and home insulation, as well as a universal basic income.

“With COP26 just around the corner, this must be the moment the government finally realises that we are living in an emergency and does something other than just greenwashing.”

ENDS

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