

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>

4

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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[Green Party responds to NAO report on local government and net zero in England](#)



16 July 2021

- **Councillor Phélim Mac Cafferty: “It is local councillors and communities who are on the frontline of tackling climate change”**

The Green Party leader of Brighton and Hove City Council has responded to the National Audit Office report out today [Friday 16 July] which finds that central government has not provided local authorities with sufficient funds or clarity over their roles in achieving net zero. [1]

Councillor Phélim Mac Cafferty successfully passed a motion at the Local Government Association General Assembly last week calling on the government to ensure that there is “adequate representation” for local authorities at COP26. [2]

Councillor Mac Cafferty said:

“From climate assemblies to retrofitting homes, it is local councillors and communities who are on the frontline of tackling climate change.

“However, as the NAO has highlighted today, the government simply does not recognise the leadership local authorities are showing on the climate emergency. Instead, the government continues to drag its feet by providing insufficient and fragmented funding, while never truly listening to what local communities need as we look to tackle the climate and ecological crises.

“It’s clear that the UK will not get to net zero without strong local leadership driving change from the bottom up, and that is why just last week the Local Government Association recognised the need for local councils to have a seat at the table for COP26 in Glasgow later this year.

“We hope that the government finally hears what those in local government have been saying for too long now, and start to provide both the funds and the tools to make the change that is necessary.”

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.nao.org.uk/report/local-government-and-net-zero-in-england/>

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2021/07/06/greens-lead-the-call-for-local-authorities-to-be-given-representation-at-cop26/>

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[Masks must remain mandatory to keep public safe, says Green Party](#)



12 July 2021

- **Peter Cranie: “Wearing masks is about following the science and recognising that this crisis isn’t yet over**

The Green Party has called for the wearing of face masks on public transport and in shops to remain mandatory beyond 19 July.

Reacting to plans to discard the legal enforcement of the protective measure, the Greens have called the government out as wholly irresponsible and divisive.

Caroline Russell, Green Party spokesperson for transport and London Assembly Member, said:

“With Covid case rates rising so worryingly fast, it is reckless of the government to remove the instruction to wear a mask in crowded, enclosed environments like shops and on public transport, where risk of transmission is high. For anyone with compromised immunity, ‘Freedom Day’ feels like anything but that.

“We’ve all got used to protecting each other by wearing face coverings when travelling by bus or by train or going into shops and polling [1] shows most people are happy to continue to do this.

“It’s wrong to put shop and transport workers, fellow passengers and people shopping at unnecessary risk of catching this terrible virus, when it is so simple to put on a mask.”

A petition launched today [2] will give the public the opportunity to demonstrate their support for the continuation of mandatory mask wearing.

Green Party health spokesperson Peter Cranie said:

“Wearing masks is about following the science and recognising that this crisis isn’t yet over.

“The vaccination programme is an incredible feat by the NHS and has managed to reduce the chance of becoming seriously ill from Covid for millions of people. But vaccines alone will not stop Covid from spreading and there are still serious risks associated with the virus, even for those that are double vaccinated. You only have to look at the numbers to see that.

“But mask wearing is also about keeping alive the incredible spirit that’s been shown during the pandemic, that we want to look after one another and that we’re still in this together. Masks have become a symbol of our efforts against Covid – wearing them helps lots of us regulate our behaviour so that we’re not putting ourselves or other people at unnecessary risk.

“That is why the government should be providing clear, science-led guidance on continuing to wear masks on public transport and in public spaces.”

Notes

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

2

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

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