

# [Green Party reveals new team of spokespeople](#)



7 June 2021

- **Thirteen spokespeople ready to reach new voters in lead up to General Election**
- **Remits include the natural world, global solidarity and citizen engagement**
- **Co-leader Jonathan Bartley says: “These aren’t just spokespeople, these are megaphones for a movement”**

The Green Party of England and Wales has revealed its updated team of spokespeople, ready to reach new voters in the lead up to the next General Election. [1]

The 13 spokespeople will stand alongside the leadership team as experts with lived experience of their areas of advocacy, and with track records of being embedded into grassroots movements on the ground.

Following the landmark election results in May, the new team of spokespeople will play a pivotal role in reaching new voters in every corner of the country, putting forward fresh thinking and bold solutions for the problems we face together.

Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley accompanied the new spokespeople in Calthorpe Community Garden in Kings Cross, London at 10.00 on Monday 7 June, to celebrate the announcement of the new team.

Bartley said:

“When people get involved in the Greens, it’s because we have a deep passion for the issues that we care about.

“Our spokespeople are embedded into networks of grassroots activists and people who have the solutions to the problems we face, whether that’s the collapse of our ecosystems or the brutality of poverty.

“These aren’t just spokespeople, we are megaphones for a movement of people who want real change”

ENDS

**Notes**

**[1]**

The list of spokespeople in full, in alphabetical order by role title.

**Jack Lenox**

*Culture, Sport and Digital Inclusion spokesperson*

Jack has worked as a software developer for over a decade, most recently as a Principal Engineer at Automattic, the company behind WordPress.com. He is a leader in the world of sustainable software engineering, a founding co-signatory of the Sustainable Web Manifesto, and an active contributor to ClimateAction.tech. He stood as the Green Party's parliamentary candidate for the constituency of Copeland in the 2017 by-election and the 2019 general election. Jack studied Ancient History at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is currently undertaking an MSc in Sustainability and Behaviour Change at the Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales.

In his spare time he is a keen amateur actor and musician, having performed for several years with the Keswick Amateur Operatic Society. He enjoys cycling, skiing, rugby and football. He supports the Sale Sharks and Forest Green Rovers. He now lives in Lancaster where he is the city's area coordinator for North Lancashire Green Party. He is also the Internal Communications Coordinator for the North West Green Party.

**Zack Polanski**

*Democracy and Citizen Engagement spokesperson*

Originally from Manchester, Zack graduated from the University of Aberystwyth (Wales) and the University of Georgia (USA.) He now lives and works in London and became the party's third London Assembly member in May's elections.

Zack's expertise in engaging and empowering people comes from working in a range of jobs outside of political life – as an actor, communications trainer and a mental health counsellor at Arts Educational, ALRA and the National School of Circus Arts. Zack's work includes an Erasmus project running over several years with young people from every single EU country coming together through the arts to work on community building, activism and how to promote democratic engagement in their home countries.

Whether it's being out on the picket line demanding care home staff receive more than a poverty wage, campaigning for Proportional Representation or working with community groups to advocate for Citizens Assemblies – empowering people lies at the heart of everything he does.

**Molly Scott Cato**

*Finance and Economy spokesperson*

Molly is an economist and writer who has campaigned for green politics all her adult life. Between 2014 and 2020 she represented South West England in the European Parliament where she led the Parliament's work on sustainable finance especially in the areas of mandatory disclosure, climate benchmarking, and the role of central and public banks in funding the sustainability transition.

She has helped to pioneer work on the green economy, based around achieving maximum well-being with minimum use of energy and resources. She was at the

forefront of the opposition to Brexit, including launching a campaign for the studies of the impact of Brexit on the economy to be made public that ended up in a legal case and a parliamentary victory, but not the release of the studies. Molly studied politics, philosophy and economics at Oxford University and later gained a doctorate in economics from Aberystwyth. She continues to be a Professor of Green Economics at Roehampton University.

### **Carne Ross**

*Global Solidarity spokesperson*

Carne is a writer and former diplomat. He served for fifteen years in the Foreign Office, with responsibilities including terrorism, the Middle East and the global environment. He resigned in 2004 after giving secret evidence to the first official inquiry into the Iraq War, the Butler Inquiry (he also later testified to the Chilcot Inquiry), offering testimony about his work covering Iraq at the UN Security Council. After his resignation,

Carne founded the world's first non-profit diplomatic advisory group, Independent Diplomat, which advises democratic governments and political groups all over the world, including the democratic Syrian opposition and Rohingya groups. Independent Diplomat helped create the High Ambition Coalition, which was responsible for some of the most important elements of the 2016 Paris climate agreement. Carne has written two books, Independent Diplomat, a critique of diplomacy, and The Leaderless Revolution about agent-led political change, and numerous articles for international publications.

### **Zoe Nicholson**

*Green New Deal spokesperson*

Zoe is Deputy Leader of the Lewes District Council and Leader of the Green Group. Through her council work she has come to understand the vital urgency of retrofitting our housing stock as well as ensuring new housing meets the highest energy standards.

She believes a Green New Deal and creating a sustainable economy will entail the creation of millions of good-quality green jobs as well as building wealth locally and tackling climate change. Zoe won the Sussex Business Woman of the Year Award in 2018 for her work as Chief Executive of a non-profit organisation. She is a strong supporter of small businesses and is committed to ensuring that they are put front and centre during the sustainability transition.

### **Peter Cranie**

*Health, Social Care and Public Health spokesperson*

Peter is a university lecturer specialising in the training of further education teachers. He is a former social worker and Further Education lecturer in Public Services and Health & Social Care. He has a record in anti-racism activism and is an active member of UCU and a member of his branch committee. He has been active in the Green Party since 2002 and was a former lead candidate for the North West region in the European Elections. Like many others, he has seen the loss of extended family members to Covid

and is passionate about holding the government to account on their mishandling of the pandemic response. Peter studied philosophy, politics and economics at Keele University and later gained an MA in Social Work at Liverpool John Moores University.

### **Carla Denyer**

*Housing and Communities spokesperson*

Carla is a Green Party councillor in Bristol. In 2018 she proposed the first Climate Emergency declaration in Europe, committing Bristol to go carbon neutral by 2030 and inspiring hundreds of other councils to follow suit. Alongside her work on the Climate Emergency, as a councillor she works to protect local services that support the most vulnerable people in her city, and has a track record of standing up for renters and working to prevent homelessness. This includes lobbying successfully for a landlord licensing scheme, securing funding for homelessness prevention, pushing for better housing for domestic violence survivors, and protecting the poorest households from rises in council tax.

Before entering politics, Carla worked as an engineer in the renewable energy industry, specialising in offshore and onshore wind technology. She is the Green Party parliamentary candidate for Bristol West and was also a candidate in the 2019 European Elections.

### **Vix Lowthion**

*Lifelong Education spokesperson*

Vix is a Secondary school teacher, single parent of three and an outspoken campaigner for a reformed national approach to education. She has been our Education spokesperson since 2016, which has involved sharing platforms with teaching unions, party leaders and educators at events across the country. Vix has led Green Party campaigns to properly fund school and Further Education budgets, to scrap OFSTED and the over-testing of young children, and to increase opportunities for learning outside of the classroom. In addition, she has worked with the Young Greens in their work to ensure greater funding to access college and university courses.

Vix studied History and gained a PGCE at York University, followed by Open University courses in chemistry, renewable technology and Geology when her children were small. She now teaches A levels in History, Geology, Classics and Sociology at a local authority school on the Isle of Wight.

### **Benali Hamdache**

*Migration and Refugee Support spokesperson*

Benali is an activist and campaigner based in Islington. He's spent his working career in campaigning and the third sector. For the EU referendum he worked for the official Remain campaign, driven by the belief that we had to fight back against the awful narrative of scapegoating migrants. He's worked as a campaigner in a variety of organisations, including migrants rights, health and disability. He's also served as the co-chair of LGBTIQ+ Greens for three years. During that time he led on a variety of campaigns, including

leading demonstrations against the death penalty for gay sex in Brunei and campaigning for trans rights.

### **Jonathan Elmer**

*The Natural World spokesperson*

Jonathan Elmer has amassed many years of experience and knowledge of the natural world having spent most of his career working as a consultant ecologist and also as a Countryside Manager for various Councils. A member of the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Jonathan has broad knowledge and expertise particularly in Botany, and with species identification skills across British plants and animals. Jonathan has detailed knowledge of how ecosystems function and the existential threats to these systems posed by human activities. He studied Environmental Biology at university and also completed an MSc in Environmental Impact Assessment in the early 1990s.

After studying he cut his cloth as an Ecologist for various Ecological Consultancies conducting numerous botanical surveys, river corridor surveys and protected species surveys. After this, he gained employment with Councils working as County Ecologist and as a Countryside Manager with responsibility for the creation and maintenance of numerous nature reserves. Throughout his career, Jonathan has sought to influence people from all backgrounds regarding the vital importance of natural systems to our own survival on the planet.

### **Shahrar Ali**

*Policing and Domestic Safety spokesperson*

Dr Shahrar Ali was Deputy Leader of the Green Party from 2014 2016, the first BME deputy of a UK parliamentary party. He has been a prominent campaigner for policing by consent against the hostile environment pursued by successive governments, which have disproportionately affected already marginalised communities; whether as a fierce critic of the disproportionate targeting of black people through stop and search or racist UKBA van slogans, to the role of shoot to kill in the fatal shooting of De Menezes and the Islamophobic effects of Prevent in schools.

He is a formidable campaigner against the abuses of civil liberty carried out in the name of domestic safety, from the release of British detainees in Guantanamo to the right of a UK citizen to a fair trial here without fear of politicisation (Begum). Shahrar has considerable media experience, whether taking on politicians on live TV or policy panels to Ted Talks or festivals at the Battle of Ideas and Bloomsbury. He is author of two popular books in Green politics, including Why Vote Green 2015, and, on a lighter note, managed to cause something of a stir on The Mash Report.

### **Caroline Russell**

*Transport and Healthy Streets spokesperson*

Caroline Russell was elected to the London Assembly in May 2016. Caroline published a report on the climate change risks for London and proposed the

motion that persuaded the Mayor of London to declare a climate emergency in 2018.

Caroline came into politics through campaigning for people friendly streets, after a career as an artist, retraining as a civil engineer and a period of parenthood combined with community activism. Since becoming the chair of the Assembly Environment Committee in 2018, Caroline has led investigations into the environmental impacts of single use plastic unflushables like wet wipes and period products, the role of ventilation in tackling cold damp mouldy homes, embodied carbon, farming in the green belt, aircraft noise and concentrated flight paths. Recent investigations have looked at tube dust, the implications of the proposed third runway at Heathrow which the Committee continues to oppose and air pollution.

### **Professor Catherine Rowett**

*Work, Employment and Social Security spokesperson*

Catherine currently holds a part time teaching and research position in philosophy at the University of East Anglia. From May 2019 to January 2020 she served as Green Party MEP for the East of England, and participated in debates and votes concerning Brexit and the European Green deal, and oversaw files on freight transport and aviation. In Norwich she worked with local councillors, Clive Lewis and UBI Labs to win support for a local pilot for Universal Basic Income. She attends the European Network of Green Basic Income Supporters, which is supporting Green parties across Europe under the aegis of the Green European Foundation. In December 2020 her online Public Lecture for the Royal Institute of Philosophy explored the philosophy of universal basic income. She is also involved in revising the Party's policy chapter on Europe. Catherine is currently deputy coordinator of the Eastern Region Green Party.

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## [Green Party to replace Batley and Spen by-election candidate](#)



6 June 2021

We were very sorry to learn of Ross Peltier's historic but highly offensive tweets. We are clear that people grow and change and should not be limited by youthful mistakes. But, as a party that champions the rights of LGBTIQ+

people and their support communities, we do not feel it is right for Ross to be the party's candidate for Batley and Spen by-election.

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## [Green Party urges Prime Minister to be more ambitious over global tax agreement](#)



2 June 2021

- **Molly Scott Cato: “As leaders of the G7 countries the UK should pledge to foster tax justice and to close UK tax havens”**

The Green Party has welcomed support for global tax cooperation to prevent corporate tax avoidance at the G7 in Cornwall later this month but called on the UK government to push for a much more ambitious agreement.

Green Party finance spokesperson Molly Scott Cato said:

“Tax shifting by global corporations has drained public coffers and led to growing inequality within and between countries across the world. We welcome President Biden’s initiative to fix a minimum corporate tax rate at the G7.

“Global tax cooperation is a classic example of enlightened self-interest where, by working together, every country can benefit, while the race to the bottom encouraged by corporations only swells their profits.

“But we need the UK government to be much more ambitious and to cover all global corporations rather than just 100 of the largest digital companies and to extend to smaller companies that drain wealth from the majority world by using tax havens. [1]

“The G7 countries should stick to Biden’s original proposal of a minimum global tax rate of 21%. Watering this down to 15% would add to pressure on many countries that currently have a corporate tax rate of higher than 15%, including the UK, and merely encourage the race to the bottom.”

The amount being lost is vast. The Institute of Public Policy Research has estimated that the Biden proposal would yield an extra £14.7bn annually for the UK, money that is vitally needed as we build back from the pandemic. [2]

Scott Cato said:

“To show real leadership as the chair of the G7 summit the Prime Minister needs to pledge to shut down the UK tax haven network based in our overseas territories. Working through the City of London these make us the centre of the global tax avoidance industry. Without action on the UK overseas territories, all other promises of global tax cooperation ring hollow.”

ENDS

## Notes

1

The deal under discussion will do little to help developing countries who lose most from global tax avoidance:<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2021/may/27/global-fair-tax-deal-on-a-knife-edge-says-uk-treasury-source>

2

IPPR  
report:<https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/ending-the-race-to-the-bottom>

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## [Green Party calls on government to do more to safeguard EU citizens living within UK communities](#)



1 June 2021

As we enter the final month for EU citizens to claim settled status the Green Party is warning that many EU citizens may end up without secure residence status.

Former MEP Molly Scott Cato said:

‘As an MEP I met many people who have lived in our community for 40 or more years, spent their working lives here, and raised their families here. Many simply take it for granted that they have the right to stay in the communities where they have spent their lives and do not realise that they need to go through a bureaucratic process to guarantee that right.

'While the publication by the Home Office of Reasonable Grounds to have delayed application to the scheme is welcome, the creation of a hostile environment for EU citizens through aggressive treatment at the border is likely to undermine their confidence that they will receive a fair hearing.

'The Home Office must step up its information campaign actively encouraging EU citizens to apply for the settled status scheme, especially after refusing to extend the deadline despite Covid making it harder for some people to apply. At a local level, each council should appoint a councillor to take responsibility for the rights of EU citizens resident in the UK, just like Greens have done in Brighton and Hove. And EU citizens' demand for a paper document to prove their immigration status should be urgently responded to.

Dr Scott Cato concluded:

'The combination of an underpowered advertising campaign and increased and aggressive checks on EU travellers ahead of the deadline has created unnecessary anxiety amongst EU citizens permanently resident in the UK. The government has failed in its duty to protect these people who have given our country so much.'

Notes:

The form to claim settled status can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families/applying-for-settled-status>

Further information about claiming status can be found from the charity Settled: <https://settled.org.uk/en/>

And EU citizens can find further support from campaign group The Three Million: <https://www.the3million.org.uk/rights-are-changing>

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## [Greens reiterate call for immediate full public inquiry in wake of Dominic Cummings evidence](#)



26 May 2021

- **Jonathan Bartley:** "Without full accountability, this government will continue to mislead and attempt to spin its way out of taking responsibility"

The Green Party has reiterated its call for a full public and judge-led inquiry into the government's handling of the pandemic to begin immediately [1] following the evidence given by Dominic Cummings to MPs today [Wednesday 26 May].

The Prime Minister's former chief adviser revealed a catalogue of failings in the UK government's response to Covid-19 which led to the avoidable deaths of tens of thousands of people when he appeared before the health and science joint committee today.

Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley said:

"The evidence provided by Boris Johnson's former chief advisor has shocked and saddened many of us in equal measure.

"From describing a government that simply had no plan, to accusing a Secretary of State of lying, public trust has been seriously undermined by how badly the Government has mismanaged the pandemic and the thousands of avoidable deaths this has caused.

"It is vital that a full public and judge-led inquiry starts immediately to discover exactly what went wrong, ensure that such mistakes are not repeated again and begin to restore public trust.

"Without full accountability, this government will continue to mislead and attempt to spin its way out of taking responsibility. Everybody suffers as this government attempts to gaslight us all over its failings during the pandemic.

"From repeatedly underestimating the impact of the virus, to spending billions on a failed test and trace system, the repeated failings are clear despite attempts to mislead the House and the public by a number of cabinet ministers.

"It will take generations for us to come to terms with what has happened since the beginning of last year, but a full public inquiry could provide the first steps for many to be able to do that."

ENDS

**Notes**

**1**

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2021/03/23/greens-call-for-inquiry-into-government%E2%80%99s-handling-of-covid-19,-one-year-on-from-start-of-lockdown/>

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