

# Caroline Lucas MP response to Rishi Sunak's summer statement on stimulus



8 July 2020

## **Caroline Lucas response to Sunak statement**

“This was yet another Government statement which didn’t live up the hype and does very little in the face of the huge challenges we face.

“For all the promises, repeated again, that this would be a green recovery with concern for the environment at its heart, all we got was a rehash of announcements made earlier this week on a voucher scheme for home insulation – covering less than 3% of homes in England.

“While this is work that desperately needs to be done to tackle emissions from buildings, the scale of what the Government is proposing will have a minimal impact, cutting just 0.14% of UK emissions. It’s a pittance in the face of what’s needed.

“The can is being kicked down the road to the Autumn Budget when we need to be accelerating action on the climate and nature crises, not delaying it. The Committee on Climate Change said the recovery from Covid needed to be a defining moment in the fight against climate change”. All that Rishi Sunak’s statement defined was a lack of ambition.

“It was also hugely disappointing that the Chancellor failed to recognise the unfairness of the self-employed support scheme which has far too many gaps to cover all those who are self-employed. He could have done something about that and he failed, washing his hands of millions who’ve lost their livelihoods.

“I have been campaigning for a cut in VAT for years, doubling down on those calls in recent months because of the terrible impact of coronavirus on the hospitality sector – most recently asking ministers in mid-June to cut the rate to 5%.

“So I’m glad the Chancellor has listened and done exactly that – but it needs to be made permanent. A lower rate of VAT for the next six months could be a lifeline for restaurants, hotels and other businesses in Brighton and Hove, where tourism and hospitality is worth about £900 million to the local economy.

“This industry will not fully recover by itself. The cut in VAT is a good place to start. But as the Chancellor said himself, what is deterring people going out is the lack of public confidence about visiting pubs, restaurants and other venues. Without an effective track and trace system for Covid, people will be reluctant to go out and spend. The Government has had months to sort this, with money being thrown around with no coherent policy or

results.

"This has to be sorted or we will risk new outbreaks of coronavirus and more lockdowns, with potentially devastating impacts on Brighton and Hove's economy."

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## **Green Party announces leadership candidates as campaign gets underway**



2 July 2020

The Green Party has today announced the list of candidates running to be the next leaders of the party before voting gets underway next month.

Three candidates have been nominated for leader, while six candidates have been nominated for the position of deputy leader. Nine other positions on the Green Party Executive are also up for election.

With nominations announced the campaign period has begun with national, regional and special interest hustings being held online through July. Members will then be able to vote between 3 and 31 August and the results will be announced shortly after.

All fully paid-up members are eligible to vote by single transferable vote, with ballots issued by email and, where required, paper copies.

The candidates for leader are:

*Shahrar Ali*

*Jonathan Bartley and Sian Berry*

*Rosemary Sexton*

The candidates for deputy leader are:

*James Booth*

*Andrea Carey Fuller*

*Nick Humberstone*

*Cleo Lake*

*Tom Pashby*

*Amelia Womack*

Green peer and former leader Natalie Bennett said:

“I’m proud to see such a strong and diverse group of candidates ready to build further on the growing strength of the Green Party, following record-breaking European and council elections last year and a strong performance in the general election.

“As we face environmental collapse and social crisis, Britain needs a strong Green voice now more than ever. Greens will always speak truth to power, offering a wholly different model of a society that provides security for all while caring for this fragile, damaged planet.

“I know the whole parliamentary team is looking forward to working with those elected, and the whole of the party as it gathers strength in all of the nations.”

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## **Green Party MP Caroline Lucas responds to Boris Johnson's infrastructure speech**



30 June 2020

Green Party MP Caroline Lucas has responded to what Boris Johnson is expected to say later today in his Rebuilding after Covid speech.

Lucas said:

“Boris Johnson had the chance – for once in his life – to show some real leadership and he’s blown it. The only ‘bounce’ these plans give us is a bounce straight into an accelerating climate crisis which he does next to nothing to address.

"The point about Roosevelt's New Deal was that it was visionary – for the 1930s. Ninety years on, we need a different vision so not a New Deal, but a Green New Deal and that has to go far beyond tree-planting, welcome though that is.

"There is nothing here which suggests that the PM has understood the size and the scale of the transformation that's needed at this pivotal moment.

"We need a new approach to managing our economy, abandoning the fixation with endless GDP growth and focusing instead on an economy which delivers health, personal well-being, and a restored and thriving natural environment.

"That is a society which would stand the test of time – for everyone."

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## **Greens demand no one is left behind as Government support starts to wind down**



29 June 2020

- **Green Party publishes comprehensive plan to ensure we avoid cliff edge as Government support starts to taper off**
- **Furlough scheme starts to wind down this week, eviction ban ends in August**
- **Jonathan Bartley: "The time has come to ask who the economy is for"**

The Green Party has today published a series of demands to guarantee nobody is left behind as the Government's coronavirus support packages start to wind down. [1]

From this week [w/c 29 June], the Government's furlough scheme will no longer be open to new applicants or additional employees and businesses will be able to bring staff back part-time before the level of support falls to 60% in October. [2].

Meanwhile, the ban on evictions for those renting will be lifted at the end of August [3], and the Government's test and trace may not be fully operational until September. [4]

It means millions across the country are facing the prospect of becoming impoverished, losing their home or falling ill unless the Government ensures

proper protections.

The Greens have now put together a series of bold proposals which would provide everybody with security as the economic, social and health consequences of the coronavirus crisis become clearer.

Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley said:

“Whether it be in the face of Coronavirus or the climate emergency, the Government’s first duty is to protect. But the last few months have seen a scattergun approach that has offered limited support to some while others have been left to fend for themselves. Soon, even these protections will disappear.

“The time has come to ask who the economy is for. The economic impact of coronavirus will last for generations and we know that the economy must be transformed if we are to prevent catastrophic climate breakdown.

“This is the moment for the Government to raise its ambition, establish real social security and not cut support. The Government’s success or failure will be judged by whether it provides people with what they need to thrive, not just survive.”

The paper, *Whatever It Takes: Our plan to leave no one behind in this crisis*, sets out a number of proposals in three main areas to ensure no one is left destitute, no one is left in danger and no one is left without a home.

Key policy proposals include a Universal Basic Income, an acceleration of a fully effective test and trace system with the highest data standards and ring-fenced funding for local authorities to provide shelter for every rough sleeper who wants it.

Bartley said:

“The coronavirus crisis has highlighted in starker terms than ever before the importance of building security, resilience and basic dignity across our society.

“The policies we are putting forward aren’t just common sense, they are essential to ensure people have the security they need as we build back better from coronavirus and transform the economy in the face of the climate crisis.”

ENDS

## **Notes**

**1**

The paper, *Whatever It Takes: Our plan to leave no one behind in this crisis*, will be published at 00.01 on Monday 29 June

**2**

The Government has announced that from 30 June, companies will no longer be able to apply for the job retention scheme or furlough additional employees.

Businesses will be able to start bringing staff back part-time from 1 July, while from August they will be expected to contribute to furloughed salaries.

From October, the Government will only pay 60% of wages and employees will pay 20% to make up 80% of the total salary.

3

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ban-on-evictions-extended-by-2-months-to-further-protect-renters>

4

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/jun/04/nhs-track-and-trace-system-not-expected-to-be-operating-fully-until-september-coronavirus>

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## **Green councillors demand Boris Johnson tackles racist abuse in politics**



18 June 2020

- Councillors call on PM to take action on divisive language in respect of Black Lives Matters protests
- Ask what he will do to ensure better protection for politicians of colour
- Nannette Youssef: “As people of colour elected into positions of power on local councils, we know first hand what it is like to experience racism”

Green Party councillors of colour have written to Prime Minister Boris Johnson to ask what he is doing to tackle racist abuse in politics and better protect politicians of colour. [1]

The letter, co-signed by Green councillors Cleo Lake, Kaltum Rivers and Nannette Youssef, [2] calls on the PM to rethink the divisive language he and other representatives have used around the recent Black Lives Matters protests.

In the letter, the councillors set out how Mr Johnson and other members of the cabinet had referred to Black Lives Matters protests as “thuggery” while one Conservative councillor described an enslaver as a “hero” and the recent protests as “frenzied thug violence”.

The letter also asks what the Prime Minister will do to protect black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) politicians from racist abuse.

Councillor Nannette Youssef, who sits on Norwich City Council, said:

“As people of colour elected into positions of power on local councils, we know first hand what it is like to experience racism. However, it is not just about what we have to deal with, but how the political discourse has an impact on communities of colour across the country.

“Political institutions including Parliament and local authorities need to be more representative. Yet when we see the racist abuse many BAME representatives receive, is it any wonder people are reluctant to put themselves in that position?”

Councillor Kaltum Rivers, who sits on Sheffield City Council, said:

“This is not just about the impact on politicians. When our political class sets an example like referring to protests as ‘thuggery’, this is reflected back at people of colour across the country in the form of abuse either online or in the street. This must stop.

“Boris Johnson needs to set out clearly what he is going to do to address this divisive language in political discourse, and what protections he will put in place for politicians of colour.”

ENDS

## Notes

1

The full letter can be viewed [here](#)

2

Councillor Cleo Lake is the former Lord Mayor of Bristol and currently represents the Cotham ward on Bristol City Council. In 2018, while still Lord Mayor, Cleo had a portrait of enslaver Edward Colston removed from her office.

Councillor Kaltum Rivers represents the Broomhill and Sharrow Vale on Sheffield City Council.

Councillor Nannette Youssef represents the Nelson ward on Norwich City Council.

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