

# Greens call for citizens' assembly to choose what economy we have after coronavirus



5 June 2020

UK citizens should be allowed to choose how the Government uses public money as it prioritises which sectors will survive if the economy shrinks due to the coronavirus crisis.

Ahead of Degrowth Day on 6 June [1], the Greens have published a report [2] which makes clear how the Government can help manage the potential crash in a way that ensures we are all better off with a smaller economy.

Following the Office for Budget Responsibility's prediction that the UK economy could shrink by more than a third [3], Green Party finance spokesperson Molly Scott Cato has set out the government must ensure we emerge a fairer and more sustainable society.

Scott Cato said:

"Projections suggest that we may lose as much as a third of our economic output as a result of the Coronavirus. If that is the same third that was causing pollution, creating carbon emissions, and generating stress and mental illness, then we can consider ourselves better off with a smaller economy.

"Since most companies will only survive as a result of the investment of public money, citizens have a right to choose what sort of economy we become after the crisis either through our elected representatives or a citizens' assembly.

"We can direct the emergency economic support in such a way that it breathes life into the long overdue proposals for a Green New Deal and energises the transition to a sustainable economy.

"With the impact coronavirus is having on the economy it feels inevitable that we are going to see jobs lost and so we must commit to ensuring that workers are retrained and reskilled for the many high-skilled and well-paid jobs that are essential to enable us to build our economy back better."

The report also sets out how the costs of preventing the economy from descending into a recession could be borne by the wealthier members of society, ensuring that we come out of the pandemic a more equal society as well as one more ready to tackle the accelerating climate emergency.

ENDS

## Notes

1

<https://www.degrowth.info/en/globalday/#:~:text=The%20next%20Global%20Degrowth%20Day,life%20for%20all%20is%20possible!>

2

The report “Less is More: How To Be Better Off With A Small Economy” [is available to read here](#)

3

<https://obr.uk/coronavirus-analysis/>

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# [Green Party stands with Black Lives Matter every step of the way](#)



4 June 2020

Green Party deputy leader Amelia Womack has outlined the party's support for the Black Lives Matter movement in the wake of the death of George Floyd.

In a video published today, Womack spoke of the need to dismantle structural racism and repeated the Greens' call for an independent inquiry into the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on communities of colour.

The full video can be [viewed here](#).

Below is a full transcript:

*The killing of George Floyd has sparked a wave of resistance around the world, and the Green Party stands with the Black Lives Matter movement every step of the way.*

*In the UK, it's common to hear people say that racism isn't as bad here as it is in America.*

*So I'm just going to say a FEW names.*

*Stephen Lawrence. No justice for decades.*

*Christopher Alder. Choked and died while handcuffed and lying face down on the floor of a police station.*

*Belly Mujinga. One of the disproportionate number of BAME people who have died of Coronavirus, with no protection at work.*

*We're still deporting people to their deaths, two years after Windrush.*

*We've still got tower blocks ready to go up in flames, three years after Grenfell.*

*Make no mistake. Britain has a bloody history of racism.*

*It's a history which limits the lives of every person of colour living in Britain today.*

*And it's a system which benefits white people like me.*

*So don't just share this video. It's not enough.*

*We need to dismantle structural racism together.*

*Donate to legal funds and mutual aid groups. Demand a public inquiry into BAME Covid-19 deaths.*

*Most importantly, amplify Black voices, listen, educate ourselves and join the fight for a better world for people of colour everywhere.*

*Not just today, not just this week. Every day. Until we win. Black lives matter.*

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# Green Party demands independent BAME Covid-19 inquiry



3 June 2020

- Greens of Colour call for independent inquiry to factor in institutional racism
- Azzees Minott: “The government’s inquiry into the impact of Covid-19 on BAME people has let communities of colour down”

The Green Party has backed calls for an independent inquiry into the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on black, Asian and minority ethnic people.

Greens of Colour chairperson Azzees Minott said: “The government’s inquiry into the impact of Covid-19 on BAME people has let communities of colour down.

“It has been clear from the start that this review simply was not going to go far enough because it was never going to address the institutional racism that affects people of colour, particularly in the context of Covid-19.

“We have known since the beginning of this crisis that communities of colour are more at risk because of the social injustices that result in wide health, housing and employment inequalities within society.

“It is simply not acceptable that this report deliberately left out the impact of public health cuts, the experience of BAME frontline staff and the effectiveness of government messaging.

“It is also extremely worrying to hear reports that Matt Hancock’s office may have removed key parts of the report which showed how discrimination and poorer life chances played a part in the increased risk to communities of colour. [1]

“We are backing the wider calls for an independent inquiry. It is time for the demands of the We Need Answers campaign to be heard.” [2]

ENDS

## Notes

1

<https://www.hsj.co.uk/coronavirus/exclusive-government-censored-bame-covid-risk-review/7027761.article>

2

<https://www.ubele.org/weneedanswers>

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## [Schools should not reopen until coronavirus tests have been clearly met, says Green Party](#)



29 May 2020

The Green Party has urged local authorities not to fall in line with the Government's timetable for reopening schools until the conditions for easing lockdown have been clearly met.

Green Party education spokesperson Vix Lowthion, who is also a teacher on the Isle of Wight, has said the health and wellbeing of staff and pupils is being put at risk by reopening schools before it is safe to do so.

Lowthion said:

"Reopening schools on Monday will have an enormous impact on the health and wellbeing of thousands of families across the country, and so it is vital that any decision to do so is based on clear scientific guidance.

"Unfortunately, while the Prime Minister claims that the five tests for easing lockdown have been met, the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser has said that the 'R rate' is still near 1. This simply does not make sense and it is not right that we are putting the lives of children and staff at risk based on such conflicting advice.

"The Independent SAGE group has also set out clearly why it is too soon to be opening schools. [1]

"The government's own five tests have a glaring omission of ensuring there is an adequate test, trace and isolate operation as recommended by the World Health Organisation [2]. We are simply nowhere near that yet and until that is in place it is not safe to reopen schools.

"We know there are real issues with inequality and some young people falling behind, but this is about weighing up the risks and putting people's health first, while doing everything we can to ensure those pupils who need more

support can receive it in other ways.

“We are working with local Green parties and councillors across the country to put pressure on their local authorities not to fall in line with the Government’s timetable on schools reopening. Local decision making is vitally important, particularly if authorities need to be able to respond to local lockdowns in the future.”

ENDS

## Notes

1

<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/independent-sage-6-key-findings-on-why-schools-shouldnt-reopen-on-june-1/>

2

<https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19-13-april-2020>

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## [Joint Biosecurity Centre: Greens sound alarm over civil liberties, data protection and scientific expertise](#)



28 May 2020

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party of England and Wales, has written to Health Secretary Matt Hancock raising a series of concerns about the role of the Joint Biosecurity Centre. [1]

It follows the announcement yesterday of the need for local lockdowns and the role the centre would play. [2]

It has previously been reported that centre would closely follow the UK’s anti-terrorism national security system. [3]

Bartley said:

“Rather than relying on the established expertise of Public Health England, Matt Hancock has chosen to establish a totally new body, the Joint Biosecurity Centre, about whom we know next to nothing but would play a significant part in local lockdowns.

“Such lockdowns would clearly impact fundamental civil rights and so it is vital that there is clarity and political accountability about who is making decisions about when and how such restrictions should be imposed and then lifted, and how they will be scrutinised

“It is essential that its membership is made public, together with information about its members, how they have been selected, on what basis and particularly whether they have scientific or medical expertise.

“So far the only public information is that the body will be led by Tom Hurd. We know very little about him, other than that he is a leading candidate to take over as the next director general of MI6.

“Putting this together with concerns about the acquisition and storage of highly personal health data rings alarm bells about our civil liberties.”

ENDS

## Notes

1

A copy of the letter is [available to view here](#).

2

On Wednesday 27 May, the Health Secretary raised the issue of local lockdowns in response to flare-ups of the Coronavirus and the role of the Joint Biosecurity Centre in deciding when they should be implemented in particular settings..

3

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/12/former-counter-terror-official-tom-hurd-put-in-charge-new-uk-biosecurity-centre-coronavirus>

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