

Campaigning Green MEP candidate says progress too slow on Cambridge University divestment

7 May 2019

University “in grave danger of being a laggard”

“In the age of climate emergency, this issue is not going to go away”

Responding to the announcement today from Cambridge University that it had agreed to provide fully costed plans setting out how it could divest multibillion-pound endowments from fossil fuel corporations (1), with the report due in six months, Jeremy Caddick, a former member of the university council, a position from which he campaigned for divestment, said:

“Seventy six UK universities, holding £12 billion in fossil fuel assets, have already committed to divest. Cambridge sees itself as a leader among British universities, but on the issue of divestment it is clearly in grave danger of being a laggard.

“Two years ago the administration dodged the issue by failing to act on a call from more than 130 academics to move towards serious action. Now, with double that number of academic supporters signing up to a motion to its ruling body, it appears there is recognition that in the age of climate emergency this issue is not going to go away.

“The administration have to up their game. That’s what the academic body is saying – and despite appearances Cambridge University is actually a workers’ cooperative. And that’s also what the students are saying, with a strong campaign demanding action, as are the young people of our city through the climate strikes.”

Jeremy Caddick is available for interview. Please contact the Green Party Press office on 0203 6919401 or press.office@greenparty.org.uk.

Notes (1)

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/may/07/cambridge-university-agrees-explore-fossil-fuel-divestment-plan>

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Green Party's Amelia Womack responds to major UN warning on environmental collapse



7 May 2019

Nature is in desperate straits in the UK

Environmental action will also improve people's lives

Responding to the major UN report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (1), just issued, which concludes that we are eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide, Amelia Womack, deputy leader of the Green Party of England and Wales, said:

“We are today pursuing policies that are trashing the planet. As the UN report highlights, the threat isn’t just climate change, we are also seeing a collapse in biodiversity and bioabundance. That’s particularly acute in Britain, where nature is in desperate straits.

“Yet we are doing that while creating unequal, economically unsustainable societies where far too many people are struggling to put food on the table and keep a roof over their heads.

“We cannot continue to treat the planet this way, and that’s an opportunity, because in making the changes we need environmentally, we can also build far healthier, happier, more stable societies than we have today.

“More than 70 per cent of carbon emissions come from cities. And it is there that we can most easily slash emissions and use resources efficiently – with great provision for active transport, walking and cycling, public transport, warm homes and great communities.

“By stopping factory farming and using farmland well we can produce a vegetable- and fruit-rich healthy diet that all can afford, and free up land for nature, rewilding and trees that will store carbon for us.”

(1) <https://www.ipbes.net/news/Media-Release-Global-Assessment>

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Historic Green Party vote as Remain passion and climate change urgency delivers huge increase in council seats



3 May 2019

Representation on 50 new councils

178 new seats already won by Greens

The Green Party is tonight celebrating a day of spectacular election results from around the country.

It went into this election with 178 councillors on 69 councils, which was a record high for the Green Party until today.

As of 5.45pm tonight, it has 313 councillors. Never before in its history has the Green Party had anything like so much local election success.

First seats were won on councils ranging from Carlisle to Folkestone, Sunderland to the Cotswolds.

Already strong areas such as Solihull and Mid-Suffolk council groups swelled to 14 and 12 respectively.

Sian Berry, co-leader, said: "This has been a spectacular 24 hours for the Green Party. The Green Surge of membership from 2015 has now borne fruit, with strong local parties around the country delivering community-based campaigns that have tapped into the passion for remaining in the EU and the determination to seek real, urgent action on climate change."

"This seems to have come as a surprise to much of the London-based media, but the Green leadership, as we have travelled around the country, have seen the way local support has blossomed, for Greens embedded in their communities but inspired by a vision of a UK living within the limits of this fragile planet while delivering a decent, secure life for everyone."

Sian added: "Voters are clearly fed up with the tired old politics of the parties of the past, who have delivered a UK in Brexit turmoil.

"Green politics is fresh and new, principled and consistent. We have always celebrated the value of the freedom of movement, which offers people opportunities to live, work, study and love on the Continent, and benefit from the contributions of other Europeans in our country.

"We have always insisted that we have to live within the physical limits of this one fragile planet, and that in doing so we can tackle the inequality, poverty and desperation that the failed policies of the past have created.

"On social media we are hearing from so many first-time Green voters who are now feeling unshackled from tradition ties, free to hope for a positive democratic future for the UK within the EU."

New councils with first seat(s):

St Helens, East Hertfordshire, South Tyneside, Sunderland, Tameside , East Devon, Colchester, Melton, North West Leicestershire, South Lakeland, Vale of White Horse , Cotswold, Folkestone, Tewkesbury, Derbyshire Dales, Eden, South Oxfordshire, Whychavon, Wyre Forest, Breckland, Darlington, Fenland, Richmondshire, Surrey Heath, Amber Valley, Stafford, Stratford on Avon, West Devon, Blabey, Charnwood, Cherwell, Craven, Kings Lynn, South Staffordshire, Wealden, Arun, Mid Devon, Mid Sussex, Rother, Swale, High Peak, Runnymede, Ashford, Cheshire West, Tonbridge and Malling, Barbegh, Chichester, Rutland, Carlisle , Thanet and West Berkshire

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Green Party already celebrating 'biggest election night in our history'



3 May 2019

Representation already on 16 new councils

42 new seats won by Greens

The Green Party is this morning celebrating the biggest election night in its history, and looking forward to a day of further big advances across the country.

The Greens are represented on 16 new councils, and representation has grown significantly in many areas where we were already represented.

As of 9.30am, Greens had won 42 new seats, a fivefold increase in the final gains in the comparable elections four years ago with the majority of results still to come in.

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said: "This is the biggest election night in our history. Greens are winning right across the country, and taking seats from a wide range of other parties.

"The Green message is clearly taking hold and can win anywhere.

"This is the product of a huge amount of hard work by many brilliant members and supporters around the country, but also many voters are converting themselves to be Greens.

"Voters see that we need a new kind of politics, one that recognises the huge imperative of acting on climate change, but also the social emergency that is creating misery and suffering in communities across the country.

"They want clear, consistent politics, principles and values."

Jonathan added: "It is also clear that Brexit has played a significant role in these elections. Greens have been clear in standing up for the UK's membership of the European Union and will continue to do so.

"We were the largest Remain party in the last European Parliament, with three great English MEPs, and are ready to carry the Remain banner into the European election campaign.

"Voters know what they are getting with the Greens, and they clearly want more of it."

The new councils on which Greens are represented: Braintree, Colchester, Cotswold, Derbyshire Dales, East Hertfordshire, Folkestone and Hythe, Melton, North West Leicestershire, Somerset West and Taunton, South Lakeland, South Oxfordshire, South Tyneside, St Helens, Sunderland, Tameside, Vale of White Horse.

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Caroline Lucas reaction to Committee on Climate Change statement



2 May 2019

Reacting to the Committee on Climate Change statement that the UK government must immediately set a legally binding target to cut greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050 [1], Caroline Lucas has said:

“I warmly welcome this rigorous & timely report, and hope the Government will take particular note of its powerful recommendation that net zero should be pursued through bold action here at home without recourse to controversial international offsets or credits.

“However we need a significantly earlier target date to ensure we reach a more certain outcome, and to reflect both our consumption, and historical, emissions. We needed to be guided by what’s scientifically necessary, not just what’s deemed to be currently ‘politically possible’.

“The report also contains a stark warning – ministers can’t simply adopt a net zero target without radical change in the short term. That makes it all the more galling that this Government has scrapped many of the politics we know that we always needed, from scrapping support for clean energy to ditching a commitment to zero carbon homes. If they’re serious about the “Climate Emergency” that was declared by parliament yesterday, we need to see an immediate step change in action”

Caroline Lucas reaction to Committee on Climate Change statement

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