

Greens win climate emergency declarations from 27 councils



25 February 2019

Green action across Britain has pushed 27 councils to declare a climate emergency creating a mechanism to hold local authorities to gold standard climate action.

The Green Party launched the campaign, which aims to see every council in England and Wales declare a climate emergency, in response to the UN's warning we have until 2030 to take positive action limit climate catastrophe [1].

With the Government in Westminster failing to take the action needed to meet the scale of this challenge, Green Party councillors and members are stepping up to take local action to curb climate breakdown.

Motions calling for councils to declare a climate emergency have been passed on 25 principal authorities across England and Wales [2], with many speeding up commitments to go carbon neutral. Climate emergencies have also been declared on 10 parish or town councils [3].

Bristol City Council was the first principal authority to declare a climate emergency in November 2018 [4], with Cambridge City Council becoming the 25th on Thursday 21 February.

Green London Assembly member Caroline Russell has also pushed the Mayor of London to declare a climate emergency after winning support from the London Assembly to go carbon zero by 2030 [5].

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party who won a climate emergency declaration from Lambeth Council where he is a councillor [6], said:

"Greens are setting the gold standard on climate action. The local people stepping up to lead where the Government has failed on climate action, are a source of hope for us all. The UN has made clear we have a limited window of opportunity before 2030 to limit climate breakdown, but the Government is twiddling its thumbs. I am incredibly proud of all Green Party councillors and members taking real climate action – it's time for Westminster to follow our example."

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/oct/08/global-warming-must-not-exceed-15c-warns-landmark-un-report>
2. Principal authorities which have passed a motion declaring a climate emergency:

Bradford City

Brighton and Hove U.B.C.

Bristol City

Calderdale

Cambridge City Council

Cheltenham

Cornwall Council

Enfield

Forest of Dean D.C.

Hastings Borough

Kirklees M.B.C.

Lambeth L.B.C.

Lancaster City Council

Lewes D.C.

Liverpool City Council

Manchester City

Milton Keynes

North Somerset Unitary

Nottingham

Oxford City

Reigate and Banstead B.C.

Richmond

Saint Albans City

Scarborough B.C.

Shropshire Unitary

Stroud DC

Trafford M.B.C

3. Parish and town councils which have passed a motion declaring a climate

emergency:

Alnwick town council

Frome town council

Glastonbury town council

Ladock parish council

Langport town Council

Machynlleth town council

Oswestry town council

Stithians parish council

Stroud town council

Totnes town council

4.

<https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/bristol-climate-emergency-carbon-neutral-2219477>

5. <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/assembly/call-on-mayor-to-declare-climate-emergency>

6.

<https://lambeth.greenparty.org.uk/news/2019/01/23/greens-declare-a-climate-emergency-and-bring-borough%20%99s-co2-emissions-target-forward-to-2030/>

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Green MEPs arrested for protesting nuclear weapons



20 February 2019

*** Molly Scott Cato one of three Green MEPs arrested for breaking into Belgian military airbase to protest stockpiling of American B61 nuclear bombs**

*** Sian Berry, co-leader of the Green Party, said: "These Green MEPs will be found on the right side of history for the principled actions they have taken"**

Molly Scott Cato, Green Party MEP for the South West, is one of three MEPs arrested after breaking into a Belgian military airbase to protest against its stockpiling of American B61 nuclear bombs.

The MEPs scaled the perimeter fence and blocked the runway holding a large banner which read: "Europe free of nuclear weapons."

The MEPs are currently being held and questioned in a local police station. They are likely to be released later today. [1]

Sian Berry AM, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

"We stand in full solidarity with our brilliant MEP Molly and her Green colleagues who have been arrested for taking a stand against nuclear weapons.

"These bombs have the potential to kill millions of people. They make us less safe, are obsolete in modern warfare and are a colossal waste of money. It is only right all US nuclear weapons are removed from Europe.

"Greens are never afraid to put their bodies on the line for what is right. These Green MEPs will be found on the right side of history for the principled actions they have taken."

Ahead of the protest, Molly Scott Cato MEP said:

"Our action is intended to challenge EU countries to remove US nuclear weapons from European soil. Each B61 bomb is 23 times more powerful than the bomb that devastated Hiroshima. These apocalyptic weapons should find no home in Europe.

"We demand that Europe's nuclear nations immediately sign up to the landmark global Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and begin the process of decommissioning their nuclear arsenals.

"Nuclear weapons are obsolete in an era of asymmetric warfare and cyber warfare and have no place in a European defence policy for the 21st century. Britain and France have ignored their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons for far too long."

ENDS.

For more information contact: press@greenparty.org.uk / 0203 691 9401

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/feb/20/green-mebs-occupy-belgium>

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Sian Berry speech – Green Candidate for London Mayor



14 February 2019

Check against delivery

Thank you so much.

I'm honoured to be chosen as the candidate for mayor in the Green Party's biggest and boldest ever campaign across London.

And I'm so excited to be standing alongside such an incredible team of people ready to represent Londoners on the Assembly.

I want to take this moment to thank everyone who put themselves forward, and to all the Green members who played a part in selecting us as candidates. Thank you so much.

This is the most exciting slate of candidates that the Greens have ever put forward for these elections – I've worked with many of these amazing, diverse, experienced, passionate, young, talented people – and Greens at last are starting to represent the real diversity of our amazing city – in our people and in the issues we are known for achieving on too.

Our record over the past two decades at delivering for Londoners can only grow with more of these brilliant people in City Hall in the Green Group of Assembly Members.

I can't wait to start campaigning with all of them and continuing to cement our status as London's third party.

Greens are well known for our good ideas.

We look at the challenges of today, and tomorrow, and we find the right, and the fair, solutions.

And on the national stage too – from the four day week, to the Green New

Deal, where Greens lead, others follow.

But here in London, elected Greens don't just come up with good ideas.

With Assembly Members in City Hall we have the power to put them into practice.

Greens make change happen.

Greens deliver for Londoners.

For nearly three years now, I have worked alongside Caroline Russell in the London Assembly.

We learned how to be effective Assembly Members from the amazing Greens before us since 2000, and we are all proof of the power of having Greens in the room – we get things done and we deliver.

Greens early on won the introduction of the London Living Wage

Last year won ballots for Londoners on estates whose homes face demolition.

And we won £45 million in funding for youth services after we exposed the huge cuts across the city.

On so many issues, we've pushed for action, when the Mayor has dragged his heels.

And just in the last few months, because of elected Greens pushing for action, the Mayor has

agreed to make emergency plans for climate change,

to campaign for rent control powers,

and to support a People's Vote on Brexit.

When you put a Green into power in London, you get someone who delivers for London.

There are so many problems facing our city today.

But few are more pressing than the housing crisis, which continues to get worse and worse.

For far too long, development in London, even on our public land, has been led by the biggest of the big developers.

But Greens have been listening to Londoners about the solutions to the housing crisis for many years. And when we make a promise, we deliver.

We promised to fight for the right for residents to have a real say – a ballot, a final say that matters – in any regeneration plans. We faced resistance from the Mayor, but now we have ballots in force and being held

for schemes the GLA funds and beyond those too.

But we need to go further – not just to prevent the worst of the top down ideas...

But to put real power in the hands of Londoners to find the right places for our new homes and plan for the housing we need from the ground up.

That's why a Green Mayor will give Londoners control over more land across our city with a People's Land Bank.

Greens will empower Londoners to seek out the places where we can build new homes, and choose how to build them.

Right across the city there is so much land going to waste.

Empty buildings. Underused car parks and garages. Pockets of unused space. Space around and above with no need to demolish anything to make way.

Our People's Land Bank would work with estate residents and community groups across the city – to map and find these empty buildings and spaces that we can build on.

Because the solution to our housing crisis isn't just about bricks and mortar. It's about giving people the power to plan what happens to their city.

It's about making sure houses are built to be homes, not speculative financial assets for the rich.

Our People's Land Bank will bring communities together and put community organising at the heart of solving the housing crisis.

From the housing crisis to the climate crisis, only Greens have the answers to the most pressing problems facing our city today.

London is overdue a Green Mayor and the fresh ideas – and the record of delivery – that we bring.

Every single Mayor so far has failed Londoners on the biggest issues.

They are all over social media but nowhere to be seen in our communities actually listening to Londoners.

People know now that Labour's slogans and the Conservatives' vested interests don't lead to the action we need. They know that the Lib Dems are dwindling – and people are ready for real change.

I'm here today to tell you that Greens are delivering.

Other parties let Londoners down. But Greens listen to Londoners, and we act on what you say.

Where other parties offer empty promises, we get results.

Every single Green you put in City Hall next year will deliver for Londoners.

Other parties can take up Green ideas in the end, but it always takes years for them to catch up with us. Why should London wait?

Vote Green in 2020.

Thank you.

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Green Party announces Sian Berry as London Mayor candidate



14 February 2019

- * Greens announce candidates for 2020 London Mayor and Assembly elections
- * Sian Berry said: "The Green Party is the only party Londoners can trust to deliver on its promises."
- * Party launches plans to put Londoners in control of tackling the housing crisis
- * Berry said: "In 2016 we promised to give power to residents whose homes faced demolition, and we delivered on that promise. Now we pledge to give Londoners a say on land use in their city."

The Green Party has announced Sian Berry [1] as its candidate for London Mayor and pledged to give Londoners control over the land in their city.

In a speech today (Thursday 14 February) [2] Berry, who will run for Mayor in the 2020 London elections, unveiled plans to create a People's Land Bank to empower communities to find empty buildings and land and choose how to bring it back into use.

Berry, who is a Camden councillor and came third in the 2016 London Mayor race when she was elected to the London Assembly, said that planning the homes London needs should be put in the hands of Londoners.

Pointing to the Green Party's track record of getting results for London, Berry said the Greens are the "only party Londoners can trust to deliver on

their promises" to tackle the housing crisis.

Last year Berry fulfilled a manifesto pledge to win ballots for residents on estates facing demolitions. [3] Since election in 2016 she has also exposed that 4,000 of London's social homes have been demolished and not replaced in recent years, with more than 7,000 set to be lost in plans approved by the Mayor. [4]

At the launch in Bermondsey the Green Party also announced its London Assembly candidates [5]. The Green Party is London's third party after coming third in the 2012 [6] and 2016 elections [7]. In 2016 Sian Berry came third in the Mayoral race and first in second preference votes, while the party received the third highest vote share behind Labour and the Conservatives [8].

Sian Berry, Green Party London Mayor candidate, said in a speech to supporters (check against delivery):

"The Green Party has a proud history of getting results for London. When we make Londoners a promise, we deliver, and have made real changes even when we are not Mayor.

"In 2016 we promised to give power to residents whose homes faced demolition, and we delivered on that promise. Now we pledge to give Londoners a say on land use in their city.

"London Greens listen to what Londoners need and we act on it. That's why we believe everyone in London should have an affordable, secure and warm home. But across the capital empty buildings like office blocks and car parks are left unused – while Londoners struggle to pay the rent or wait for years to get social housing. That isn't right, and we have to start planning now for how we bring these underused spaces and empty land back into use.

"A Green Mayor would give Londoners control over how our city develops to provide the homes we need with a People's Land Bank, which would empower communities to find land and buildings currently going to waste and choose how to bring it back into use.

"The Green Party has the answers to London's biggest problems and we're the only party Londoners can trust to deliver on its promises."

Notes:

1.

Sian Berry has lived in London for 20 years. She joined the Green Party in 2001 motivated by the threats of globalised capitalism and climate breakdown. Before becoming a full time politician Sian worked for as a campaigner at the charity Campaign for Better Transport. Sian has stood for the Greens in council elections in her home borough of Camden since 2002, elected to Camden Council in 2014.

Sian has been the Green candidate for Mayor of London twice, in 2008 and

2016. She came third in 2016 when she was also elected to the London Assembly alongside Caroline Russell. It was the second time a Green came third in the Mayoral race after Jenny Jones took the spot in 2012.

On the London Assembly, Sian is chair of the Housing Committee and a member of the Police and Crime Committee. She works on a wide range of issues, and her advocacy on behalf of Londoners has helped highlight hidden homelessness and the loss of council housing. She has also won new funding for youth services and improved renting rights. In 2018 the Mayor dramatically changed his policy and created a new right for residents on estates to have a ballot over demolition plans, after a long and successful campaign by Sian and resident groups across London.

2. The Green Party candidate for London Mayor was announced at a launch event at 2pm on Thursday 14 February 2019 in Leathermarket Gardens, Bermondsey Village Hall Trust, Kirby Grove, London, SE1 3TD.

3. <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/assembly-members/publications-sian-berry/publication-sian-berry-response-mayors-plans-resident-ballots-regeneration>

4. http://www.sianberry.london/news/housing/2018_09_03_net_loss-of-council-homes-regeneration/

5.

Green Party candidates on the London Assembly list:

Sian Berry
Caroline Russell
Zack Polanski
Benali Hamdache
Gulnar Hasnain
Dr Shahrar Ali
Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah
Ben Fletcher
Scott Ainslie
Hannah Graham
Peter Underwood

6. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/vote2012/assembly/>

7. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2016/london/results>

8.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/london-mayoral-election-results-green-party-sian-berry-second-preference-votes-a7018031.html>

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Green Party responds to IPPR report on climate change



12 February 2019

The Green Party of England and Wales have today responded to the report – *This is a Crisis: Facing up to the Age of Environmental Breakdown* – released by the Institute for Public Policy Research. [1]

Co-leader Jonathan Bartley said in response:

“This report is clear – the impact of human activity on our climate is utterly destructive, and it will have serious political and economic implications. There still is an opportunity to build a fairer and more sustainable future, but that window is closing fast.

“The UN warned us we have just 12 years to take positive action to avoid climate destruction but we must start right now. The Government desperately need to find the political will to take the bold steps so urgently needed.”

[1] <https://bit.ly/2tjzTJC>

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