

Bristol Greens declare climate emergency and bring city's CO2 emissions target forward 20 years



13 November 2018

A Green party motion calling on the Mayor of Bristol to declare a climate emergency and bring the city's carbon neutrality target forward by 20 years (to 2030) passed in a Full Council meeting this evening (Tuesday 13 November) with support from councillors of all parties, committing Bristol to the most ambitious climate change target out of all UK Core Cities.

The motion, submitted by Councillor Carla Denyer, was inspired by the recent IPCC report which warned that humanity has 12 years to take emergency action in order to prevent global warming greater than 1.5°C. Above this, the risks to humanity of floods, droughts, extreme heat and poverty become much greater, impacting on hundreds of millions more people.⁽²⁾ The motion text notes the progress already made by Bristol Council, and argues that as a former European Green Capital, Bristol has an important role to play in leading the UK in reducing carbon emissions as fast as possible. It asks the city's Mayor Marvin Rees to declare a Climate Emergency and pledge to make Bristol carbon neutral by 2030 (bringing forward the current target by 20 years), call on national government for more powers and resources to support this, work with partners in Bristol and other governments both in the UK and nationally to prevent climate change above 1.5°C, and to report back in six months on the actions that will be taken to address the emergency.

Councillor Denyer said:

"This is a fantastic day for Bristol and I'm delighted the Council will be bringing forward its target for carbon neutrality to 2030. The IPCC report made it clear that time to preserve Earth as we know it is running out. We can't wait for the UN or national governments to negotiate when we have just 12 years to act – we have to show how it's done and commit to ambitious action at the level of cities, which we did this evening.

"I'm grateful to my colleagues in the Green Group, who supported me in bringing this motion to council and leading the other political groups in the right direction, to those councillors from other parties who saw the importance of taking action, and to the public who did a fantastic job submitting statements and emailing their councillors in support of this motion. Thanks to all of you, Bristol is now leading the rest of the UK on climate change."

Councillor Steve Clarke, who seconded the motion, said he was overjoyed by the outcome and added:

“The next step is to ensure that this evening’s commitments are followed by ambitious action. Over the coming years, Greens will continue to hold Bristol Council to account on today’s decision, no matter what party is in power. We know that 2030 is a big commitment for the city and to meet this target an awareness of carbon emissions will have to factor into every decision the Council takes. We look forward to the Mayor reporting back to us in 6 months on what action he will take.”

Background:

Full text of the motion is attached [here](#). Actions that the Council could take might include involving carbon reduction in every decision the Council takes, stepping up the electrification of its vehicle fleet, requiring higher energy efficiency standards for new development, putting further work into reducing food waste across the city, working with city partners to encourage lower emissions and reviewing contradictions, for example the Mayor’s support for the expansion of Bristol Airport.

The IPCC report (available [here](#)) focusses on the impact that 1.5°C would have on the planet compared to 2°C. Some of the key findings were:

- Insects and plants were almost twice as likely to lose half their habitat at 2°C compared with 1.5°C warming
- Coral populations would be wiped out at 2°C warming but more than 10% would have a chance of surviving at the lower temperature
- Global fish stocks would lose 3 million tonnes at 2°C, twice the decline of 1.5°C, due to lower oxygen levels and greater acidity in the ocean
- Hundreds of millions more people, particularly in less developed countries, would be at risk of climate-related poverty with a 2°C increase
- The global population exposed to water stress would be 50% lower with 1.5°C warming
- At current levels, the world is on course for 3°C of warming

The motion was supported by Climate activists [Rising Up](#), who organised the prominent Extinction Rebellion protests in London and protested outside Bristol Council before the meeting.

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Review of Government's bovine TB strategy published



13 November 2018

Responding to the conclusions of the 'Bovine tuberculosis (bTB) strategy review 2018' [1], Keith Taylor MEP, the Green Party of England and Wales' spokesperson on animal rights, said:

"This report makes for frustrating reading. The findings make it clear that cattle movements, land management and poor biosecurity measures are the main driving force behind the spread of bTB in England. At the same time, it highlights that the main use of the inhumane and hugely expensive badger cull is to placate farmers otherwise reluctant to take the less bloodthirsty but more effective measures."

"It is worth pointing out, as Sir Godfray does, that the review was specifically asked not to look at the effectiveness of the current badger cull with Ministers fearful it would have exposed the fact the government has consistently been unable to muster any reliable data to demonstrate its effectiveness."

"Ultimately, the report calls on the government to urgently adopt humane bTB controls, including vaccinations, that aren't based on blind ideology or appeasing vested interests. It is time to end to put an end to the Tories' mass badger extermination programme once and for all."

On claims that the report supports the current culling programme, Mr Taylor added:

"Anyone spinning today's findings as a vindication of the current badger cull is deliberately misleading the public and farmers. The government explicitly limited the scope of this review to ensure it couldn't be critical of nor call for an end to the current inhumane badger cull policy. But, as veterinary surgeons exposed only yesterday, lies and misrepresentation are a common tactic used to defend the Conservatives' cruel, expensive and ineffective cull."

[1] <https://bit.ly/2JZotS0>

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[Greens: Government resorting to 'shameless PR exercise of false information' over badger cull](#)



12 November 2018

Responding to criticisms by a group of vets who have [accused the government](#) of “barefaced lies” over the effectiveness of badger culls in the South West, Green Party of England and Wales MEP Molly Scott Cato, who sits on the European Parliament’s Agriculture Committee and is MEP for the cull zones, said:

“The government are resorting to a shameless PR exercise of false information because the evidence from this cruel and ineffective cull doesn’t stack up.

“Massaging figures and cherry-picking evidence serves no one. It fails the farmers who are so deeply affected by bovine TB, it upsets the many people who are devoted to one of our iconic species, and of course inflicts terrible suffering on badgers themselves.

“Greens have always said that we need effective and scientifically grounded policy to deal with this terrible disease. We need to see tighter controls on cattle movement, strict biosecurity measures and the roll out of a vaccination programme for both badgers and cows.”

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[Dover District Labour opposition leader joins Green Party](#)



2 November 2018

*** Cllr Mike Eddy of Dover District Council and Deal Town Council becomes first Green councillor in Dover District after 10 years as leader of Labour opposition**

*** Cllr Eddy said: “I’m excited to join a party which believes in putting**

power in local people's hands"

The leader of Dover Labour party Mike Eddy has joined the Green Party to become Dover District's first elected Green councillor.

Cllr Eddy, who has been a Labour councillor in Deal and Dover for more than 20 years and led the opposition for 10 years, made the move after being impressed by the Green Party's commitment to making sure "local decisions are made by local people and their representatives."

Dover and Deal Green Party officers, Beccy Sawbridge, John Lonsdale and Sarah Gleave, said: "We are delighted to welcome Mike on board, and now look forward to making a few changes in the district."

Green Party co-leader Sian Berry, who is an elected member of the London Assembly, joined Cllr Eddy and local Greens at Dover Seafront on Friday 2 November for the announcement, where Berry backed the local party's commitment to securing a free flow of traffic.

Berry said the people of Dover must "have a say on their future" after local freight clearance experts warned Dover would be hit by gridlock if the type of Brexit the Prime Minister is pursuing goes ahead.

Cllr Eddy, who is councillor for Mill Hill ward in Deal, was also galvanised to make the change by the Green Party's firm commitment to scrap Universal Credit, which has left people in Dover District facing poverty since its rollout in July this year, as well as its campaigns to tackle air pollution and protect Dover and Deal's green spaces and biodiversity.

Cllr Mike Eddy said:

"I'm excited to join a party which believes in putting power in local people's hands. Whether it's standing up against the damage that May's government decisions will inflict on the port and community in Dover, or fighting to scrap Universal Credit, the Green Party is committed to making sure local decisions are made by local people.

"The decision to leave Labour after ten years as leader of the opposition was not made lightly, but it was the right one. I am a firm believer that no one has the monopoly on wisdom and look forward to working together with progressive local councillors and my new Green colleagues to make sure the people of Dover District and Deal Town are not overlooked or left behind."

Martin Whybrow, lone Green County Councillor, said:

"Mike is an excellent addition to our Green councillors. I am delighted to welcome him. I got to know Mike at KCC and he is hard-working, principled and knowledgeable. He did an excellent job of holding the Conservatives in power to account and working for residents. He will join 176 other Green Party councillors of principal authorities nationally, and another 220 Green town and parish councillors."

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

“History has been made in Dover today with Mike joining us as the first Green councillor for the district. Mike has a track record standing up for what matters to the people of Dover District and Deal Town and it’s a privilege to welcome him to our party. The local Green Party is already a growing force for good here and I have no doubt he will be a valuable addition to that work.

“Dover is on the Brexit frontline with the port and community set to feel the full force of the damaging policies the Government is pursuing, and Greens are committed to making sure people in every community in the country have a say on their future in or out of the EU and how the impact of any Brexit deal is felt in their area. The Dover and Deal Green Party will work with local people to make sure journeys to work, schools and health appointments are not subject to gridlock, that the vulnerable are not further beset by food and fuel poverty.”

Notes:

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/jun/20/port-of-dover-warning-regular-gridlock-congestion-hard-brexit-trade>

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[Greens welcomes referral of Arron Banks to National Crime Agency](#)



1 November 2018

Green Party of England and Wales has welcomed news that Arron Banks has been [referred to the National Crime Agency](#) (NCA) for “suspected criminal offences committed during the EU referendum”.

The Electoral Commission suspect Banks was not the true source of millions worth of loans made to Better for the Country, the company he set up to promote Brexit. The Commission believe these funds came from impermissible sources, and that he and others have concealed the true details of financial transactions.

Responding to the news, MEP for the South-West Molly Scott Cato welcomed the decision by the Electoral Commission.

She said:

“Arron Banks financial affairs have always been highly suspect. This referral to the National Crime Agency has vindicated the suspicions many of us have long had. It is clear he is not just a dodgy dealer, with alleged Russian connections, he is potentially a crook.

“He has never satisfactorily accounted for his claims of having bankrolled Leave.EU with his own money or explained where that money came from.

“This referral also draws attention to the poor judgement of the BBC in allowing Banks airtime to rubbish the Electoral Commission. This gave him a platform to challenge breaches of electoral rules and dress these up as a political debate.

“This not only undermined the rule of law, it also threatens our democracy.”

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