

# Greens urge radical railway rethink as Transpennine Express enters last week of contract



**22 May 2023**

The Green Party has said the privatised rail industry has reached the end of the line as FirstGroup's contract to run Transpennine Express comes to an end following months of cancellations and delays on the main intercity rail line in the North of England.

Earlier this month, Transport Secretary, Mark Harper, confirmed FirstGroup – which runs the Transpennine Express – will be stripped of the franchise when its contract ends on Sunday 28 May and services will be run by an Operator of Last Resort.

Matt Edwards, Green Party spokesperson for Transport and Leader of the Green Party on Bradford Council, said:

“The shambolic levels of service on this crucial rail line has not only caused misery to passengers but has caused serious economic damage to towns and cities across the North of England.

“FirstGroup has consistently refused to take responsibility for the service and consistently used loopholes to try and hide just how bad a job they were doing (1).

“The privatisation and fragmentation of our railways just hasn't worked. The government is spending more money now subsidising the railways than it was in the 90s.

“Instead of delivering improvements, large amounts of money have just been handed to private companies to give to their shareholders whilst rail fares have gone up and service has gone down.”

The Green Party spokesperson also called for a complete rethink of how the railways are operated and funded.

“For decades now we have talked about our railways like they are a business that must be profitable. The truth is that our rail network is a public service that needs to benefit everyone. To do that it must be brought back into public ownership.

“Giving people affordable and reliable public transport as an alternative to driving will reduce congestion on our roads which will help tackle air pollution and reduce carbon emissions.

"We don't expect our roads to make a profit. Why are the railways different?"

ENDS

## Notes

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/nov/27/revealed-north-of-england-train-line-vastly-under-reports-cancellations>

*For more information or to arrange an interview contact the press office on [press@greenparty.org.uk](mailto:press@greenparty.org.uk) or call 0203 691 9401*

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# "Saying sorry is not enough": Greens call for water companies to be brought into public ownership



## 18 May 2023

The Green Party has reiterated its call for water companies to be brought into public ownership after Water UK apologised for presiding over a rising tide of sewage discharges.

Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

"Rivers and coastlines up and down the country have faced years of assault at the hands of the water companies and a government that has refused to act.

"Saying sorry is simply not enough – and suggesting that the public has to pay for any improvements, after £57bn has been paid out in payouts to shareholders over the last 30 years [1], just adds insult to injury.

"Currently water companies can, almost with impunity, dump sewage into our rivers, waterways and coastal waters with an appalling cost to public health and our wildlife. This situation cannot go on.

"For decades, money that should have been invested in improved infrastructure has been trousered by water company executives and shareholders.

"Only the Greens have the courage to challenge this failed experiment with privatisation and to say that a service as vital as water and sewage needs to be run by the public and for the public good.

"Shareholder payouts need to be halted with immediate effect and, ultimately, the water supply needs to be brought back into public ownership at the earliest practicable opportunity in order to end leaks, stop sewage discharges and cut bills."

ENDS

## Notes

1

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/jul/01/england-privatised-water-firms-dividends-shareholders>

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# Greens call for halt to all new fossil fuel projects after 1.5C warning



## 17 May 2023

The Green Party has urged the UK government to halt all new fossil fuel projects with immediate effect after the World Meteorological Organisation said there was a 66% chance we will pass the 1.5C global warming threshold between now and 2027.

Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

"Our climate and natural world is in breakdown and the reason for this is crystal clear – the burning of fossil fuels.

"Despite this, the UK government continues to drive us all into further climate chaos by opening new coal mines, offering new oil and gas licences and spending billions on building new roads.

"Let this be the moment which shows those in power that they need to be taking decisive action now. I am urging Rishi Sunak to do the right thing and cancel the Cumbria coal mine, stop the Rosebank oil field and drop all new climate-wrecking oil and gas licences immediately.

"It is only by keeping fossils in the ground and investing in measures which reduce our emissions and improve the quality of all of our lives that we will ever be able to address this climate and ecological emergency."

ENDS

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## **Greens call for Renters' Reform Bill to go further and end spiralling rents**



**17 May 2023**

Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer has welcomed the government's plans to end no fault evictions in a bill to be introduced to Parliament today [1], but urged it to go much further to protect those facing unaffordable rent increases in the middle of a cost of living crisis.

Denyer said:

"Everyone deserves a place to call home, and so I welcome the government's plans to end no fault evictions, but this is an opportunity to go much further and help the thousands of people who are trapped in the private rental market by spiralling rents that bear no relationship to incomes.

"In the short term we need to see an immediate rent freeze, to go alongside an eviction ban, to prevent people being made homeless during this cost of living crisis.

"And then in the longer term, I want to see councils being given the power to bring in rent controls in areas where the housing market is overheated.

"At the same time, we need much stricter controls on the type of new homes being built to include more affordable and social housing for buying and renting."

ENDS

**Notes**

**1**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-65612842>

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## Green Party reaction to Rishi Sunak's food and farming summit



**16 May 2023**

Responding to today's food and farming summit at Downing Street, co-leader of the Green Party, Adrian Ramsay, said:

"A food and farming summit is welcome at a time when food prices continue to soar [1]. Such a summit is something the Green Party called for over a year ago [2].

"However, with the emphasis on supermarkets and major food manufacturers, it feels like this summit is lacking the transformative vision that we need. The door to Number 10 seems blocked to many UK small scale farmers and food producers who have creative ideas on supplying healthy and affordable food while at the same time showing how agriculture can help tackle the climate and ecological emergency.

"The Green Party has long supported regenerative agriculture, farming that works with nature rather than against it. A major focus here should be building farming systems that capture carbon, whether through organic farming or agroforestry, as well as the restoration of peatlands.

"There is a growing public trend towards more plant-based diets which provide new opportunities for UK farmers as well as easing the climate pressure from meat and dairy production. We need a horticulture plan to replace the plan withdrawn last month, but focused on local production for local markets rather than the mechanised vegetable factories favoured by the supermarkets [3].

"We should be seizing this opportunity to look at the successful farming methods which capture carbon, improve soil quality and increase biodiversity."

### **Notes**

1. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-65596502>

2.  
<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2022/03/11/greens-call-for-emergency-food-security-summit/>
3.  
<https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/fruit-and-veg/horticulture-alliance-resigns-from-government-roundtable-ahead-of-sunak-summit/679218.article>

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