

Closure of Ffos-y-fran coal mine must mark next chapter of Wales' renewable revolution, say Greens



15 August 2023

Wales Green Party leader Anthony Slaughter has said the closure of the Ffos-y-Fran coal mine [1] should mark the next chapter in Wales' rich industrial heritage and its journey to becoming a renewables powerhouse.

Slaughter said:

"Fuelling the nation's energy needs is part of who we are in Wales. Coal has been central to that, but our future now must be as a renewables powerhouse.

"And it is vital that everybody is included as we make this transition. That means we need investment in renewables alongside financial and training support for those workers who will now lose their jobs as a result of the closure of this mine.

"The Welsh government refused to step in to stop this coal mine operating 11 months after its planning permission ran out. That is one more symptom of Labour's failure to deliver a clean green future for everyone.

"Our natural resources provided the fuel for the Industrial revolution. Now our natural resources – wind, sun and water – can lead a green industrial revolution.

"Local people have led the campaign to end coal mining and restore our natural environment. Now they need the Welsh government to support them, show political leadership and deliver a shared vision of Wales as a renewables powerhouse.

"In the first instance, that means government holding the company to its promise to restore the environment. Then, we need investments in green jobs of the future that respect Welsh people's historic contribution to meeting the energy needs of the whole UK."

ENDS

Notes

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<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cxek2j20x5lo>

For more information or to arrange an interview contact the press office on press@greenparty.org.uk or call 0203 691 9401

Greens call for rail fare freeze as Government announces below inflationary fare rise



15 August 2023

Following the government announcing it plans to increase rail fares by less than the rate of inflation and will delay fare increases until March 2024, Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay has called on the government to go further and freeze rail fares for at least the next year [1].

Contrasting year on year rail fare rises with the freeze in fuel duty for drivers and cuts to air passenger duty for domestic flights, Ramsay has urged the government to ensure that rail passengers are not penalised for using a more sustainable form of transport.

Adrian Ramsay said:

“This government is moving in completely the wrong direction. Fuel duty has been frozen since 2011, while air passenger duty cuts this year will be a disaster for the climate crisis by encouraging people to fly more.

“This is despite the fact UK rail passengers are already paying more to travel by train [2] than flying and are faced with some of the most expensive tickets in Europe.

“Emissions from transport are higher than for any other sector of the economy. If the UK is to meet its climate commitments then we need more people choosing trains over cars and planes, and we need more commuters opting for public transport and active travel to get to work.

“Making train travel more expensive, while closing rail ticket offices that support travellers to get the best deal, would underscore the government’s contempt for climate action and the travelling public.

“Pushing up prices at all would make it harder for hard-pressed travellers to make the right decision for pocket and planet.

“That is why I am urging the government to come forward with a plan which will freeze rail fares. This would help address the cost of living crisis

while helping to tackle the climate emergency.

“The Green alternative to the continued rundown of our railways is clear – make train travel affordable, safe and easy.

“That means bringing the whole rail system into public ownership, making sure it is always cheaper than the equivalent route by air or road, and encouraging more freight onto rail.

“That’s a win-win for the public and tackling the climate crisis.”

Notes

1. The rise in rail fares each January is usually based on the annual increase in Retail Price Index (RPI) measured the previous July. The price cap is usually announced by the Government each December. The government has indicated that next year’s rise will be below inflation and any increase will also be delayed until March 2024. However, the Green Party believe there should be a fare freeze. [Next year’s English rail fares rise will be below inflation, says Government](#)

2. [Recent research suggests train travel is 35% more expensive than flying](#), despite the fact that plane journeys on average emit twice the CO2 on average (118% more) compared to travelling by train, while fuel duty is frozen

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[Greens call for Inglorious 12th to be cancelled after avian influenza discovery](#)



11 August 2023

The Green Party has called for grouse shooting season which is due to begin tomorrow (August 12), on what is known as the Inglorious 12th, to be cancelled following reports of avian influenza in red grouse in Scotland [1].

Green peer Natalie Bennett has called for all shooting activity to stop and for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to investigate how prevalent Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza is among birds on grouse moors.

Bennett said:

“We have seen reports today that Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, the disease that is cutting such a swathe through our wild bird populations, has just been found in red grouse in Scotland.

“Grouse moors, with their maximum annual population, are a bio-disaster waiting to happen tomorrow when the shooting season opens.

“It’s extremely concerning that, as things stand, tomorrow will see people walking and driving all over the moors, with their shotguns at the ready, about to pick up at least some of those lead-laced carcasses and spread them around the country.

“How, even given the prominent position of grouse moor owners and shooters in our corridors of power, can this biorisk be accepted?

“All shooting due to take place must be halted while this risk is fully investigated to ensure the safety of both wildlife and people across the country.”

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<https://raptorpersecutionuk.org/2023/08/10/highly-pathogenic-avian-influenza-confirmed-in-red-grouse-in-scotland/>

For more information or to arrange an interview contact the press office on press@greenparty.org.uk or call 0203 691 9401

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[Villiers Shell shareholding shows government failing to tackle climate crisis](#)



11 August 2023

Reacting to the revelation that former Environment Secretary Theresa Villiers had a substantial shareholding in oil giant Shell during her time in the Cabinet [1], Green co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“Of course it’s unacceptable that the former Secretary of State didn’t register the shares when her holding increased in value. However, what was the person in government with responsibility to deliver its key environment policies – including moving us away from fossil fuels – doing with shares in Shell at all?

“You have to question how serious the Conservatives are in tackling the climate crisis when the Cabinet contains people deriving financial benefit from fossil fuel company shares of any value.

“We need representatives in Parliament focussed on freeing us from our dependence on oil and gas which is destroying our planet and instead investing in the energy sources of the future – wind, sun and water.

“Investing in renewable energy now will create sustainable green jobs and support workers in the oil and gas industry to transfer their skills and experiences to the energy sources of the future.”

NOTES

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<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/top-tory-theresa-villiers-70k-30675878>

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[Greens call for “Welcome Refugees Week” as Tories announce further clamp down on asylum seekers](#)



7 August 2023

In response to the government’s so-called “small boats week,” the Green party has called instead for a “Welcome Refugees Week”. As 500 asylum seekers are set to be housed on a barge off the Dorset coast and the government announces steep increases in fines for landlords and employers who house and give work to asylum seekers [1], Benali Hamdache, Green Party spokesperson on Migration and Refugees, said:

“No barge is a suitable home for refugees. Most people who reach our shores and claim asylum are doing so completely legitimately due to fleeing war, persecution, discrimination or climate breakdown. The vast majority are desperate people who need to be met with compassion. Housing them in a barge is to treat them as prisoners and is heartless.

“The Green Party would open safe and legal routes for asylum seekers. With such routes, many refugees would not be forced into making a dangerous crossing of the English Channel.

“We want this week and every week to be “Welcome Refugees Week.” Rather than a heavy-handed approach on landlords and employers who house and give work to asylum seekers, Greens would enable families seeking protection to be accommodated in a house or flat and for single applicants to have their own room if in shared accommodation. We would also allow applicants of working age to be allowed to take up employment. This is not only the humane approach, it also acknowledges the economic and cultural benefits refugees bring to communities across the UK.”

Notes

1. <https://news.sky.com/story/bibby-stockholm-asylum-seekers-may-be-housed-on-bergs-barge-from-today-as-govt-unveils-new-migration-policy-12935246>

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