

Chancellor has ignored plight of millions of families, Greens warn



23 March 2022

- **Spring Statement negligent to those on lowest incomes**
- **Not one mention of the climate made by Rishi Sunak during statement**
- **Adrian Ramsay: “It’s staggering that while the country faces crisis after crisis, the Chancellor continues to look after the interests of fossil fuel companies and his party’s backbenchers, while ignoring the plight of millions on lower incomes”**

Responding to the Chancellor’s Spring Statement today [Wednesday 23 March], Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“It’s staggering that while the country faces crisis after crisis, the Chancellor continues to look after the interests of fossil fuel companies and his party’s backbenchers, while ignoring the plight of millions on lower incomes.

“It’s negligence in the extreme to have offered so little to help those struggling through this cost of living crisis, when we would have restored and doubled the Universal Credit uplift for those on the lowest incomes.

“And he didn’t even bother to mention the climate once. The Chancellor clearly does not see that tackling the cost of living crisis requires solving the climate crisis.

“The Green Party has repeatedly called for a ‘Dirty Profits Tax’ on the excessive profits from UK oil and gas extraction, and to use this money to provide proper support for every household, and particularly those who need it most.

“Instead, the Chancellor has turned a deaf ear to the pleas of those on the lowest incomes, ignored the plight of those on benefits and has done next to nothing to tackle the climate crisis.

“He had money to spend but chose to spend it on tax cuts for the better off and encouraging climate-damaging activity. A cut to fuel duty which will disproportionately benefit wealthier households that are more likely to own cars, more likely to drive larger cars, and more likely to travel long distances, fails to support those reliant on ever more expensive public transport.

“While the cut to VAT on energy efficiency measures and renewables is a positive step and a win for green campaigners, it will not have the impact we need without a proper government retrofit programme to support people to take advantage of it. The fact there was no clear plan for a full retrofit programme, which would help keep people warm and reduce eye-watering energy

bills, shows the absolute lack of vision this floundering government has.

“Meanwhile, the promised future tax cut shows the Chancellor is focused on winning the next general election, and not helping those on benefits and lower incomes who are in desperate need right now.”

Ahead of today’s budget, the Green Party called on the Chancellor to use the Spring Statement to:

- **Address pay inequality and provide real society security**, including restoring the £20 uplift to Universal Credit and doubling it to £40 per week and extending emergency fuel payments to all by providing each household with an additional £320 to help them pay for spiralling energy costs
- **Invest in energy efficiency and energy security**, including funding local authorities to better insulate all homes and carry out deep retrofit of 1 million homes a year
- **Invest in green jobs**, including a retraining guarantee for existing oil and gas workers, as well as those who have recently left the sector
- **Tax pollution and wealth**, including increasing the supplementary tax already charged on North Sea oil and gas to 40%, which would raise £5bn, and transition towards a carbon tax to make polluters pay
- **Use the power of money for good**, including banning any bank holding a UK banking licence from investing in new fossil fuel development and updating the Bank of England’s mandate so that funding the sustainability transition becomes a central objective, alongside the maintenance of price stability.

ENDS

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