

Cost of living crisis is actually an income crisis and inequality scandal, say Greens



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- **Increase minimum wage, ensure public sector wages keep pace with inflation and start restoring real wage losses from years of austerity**
- **Restore the £20 uplift to Universal Credit and double it to £40 per week**
- **Increase tax on the wealthiest to tackle rising inequality and support those on lowest incomes**

As Green Party members join this weekend's TUC Cost of Living march [1], the Party is calling for the government to increase the minimum wage, ensure public sector wages keep pace with inflation, and start restoring the real-terms wage losses from years of austerity. Last year the Green Party was the only major party to support the #NHSPay15 campaign – a 15% pay rise for all NHS workers [2].

The party is also calling for a restoration of the £20 uplift in Universal Credit and doubling it to £40 a week, with equivalent increases for those on legacy benefits. They say measures to support those on the lowest incomes should be paid for through higher income taxes on the wealthy.

Greens point to increasing inequality during the Covid pandemic, and say genuine levelling up must involve a redistribution of wealth and a boost to incomes of the poorest.

Green Party co-leader, Carla Denyer said:

“As Greens we fully support the TUC’s call for an increase in wages, with public sector increases being funded by the Treasury. The cost of living crisis is actually an income crisis. It is vital that wages keep pace with inflation this year. We also need to see a reversing of the real-term wage losses that took place during the Tories’ era of austerity.

“The situation facing those who claim benefits is even more serious – whether or not claimants are in work. This is why Greens have long called for restoring the £20 Covid uplift to Universal Credit and doubling it to £40 per week, with equivalent increases for those on legacy benefits.

“We are also witnessing an inequality scandal in the UK. During the Covid pandemic, the richest 10% of households enjoyed an estimated increase in wealth of £50,000 each on average [3], dramatically widening the gap between the richest and poorest households. We need to raise taxes on the highest incomes to redress this imbalance and fund support for those on the lowest incomes.”

Notes

1. TUC “We Demand Better march on the cost of living” is on Saturday 18th June: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/DemandBetter>
2. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2021/03/06/green-party-supports-calls-for-15-pay-rise-for-nhs-workers/>
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2021/jul/12/uk-wealth-gap-widens-in-pandemic-as-richest-get-50000-windfall>

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