

Green Party backs Macron's call for UK to take more child refugees



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*** Jonathan Bartley: "There's no excuse for the Government's continued abdication of responsibility."**

The Green Party has backed French President Emmanuel Macron's call for the UK to take in more refugees from Northern France, ahead of a meeting with Theresa May on Thursday [1].

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, called on both Macron and May to do more to help refugees. Bartley has visited the camps in Northern France three times to meet refugees and see first hand the conditions they face.

There are currently about 1,000 refugees living rough in Northern France right now, 100 of whom are children as young as ten.

Conditions are becoming increasingly desperate with three refugees losing their lives in Calais in recent weeks, including a 15-year-old boy [2]. Freezing temperatures mean hypothermia, frostbite and trench foot are commonplace.

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

"The French president is absolutely right to ask the British Government to do more to help solve the humanitarian crisis on our doorstep. There's no excuse for the Government's continued abdication of responsibility.

"Child refugees in Northern France are extremely vulnerable to abuse and trafficking. The UK Government must urgently fulfil its promise under the Dubs scheme to take in at least 480 unaccompanied child refugees, and extend the cut-off date beyond March 2016 so even more young people can be helped.

"But the Prime Minister must also have her own demands to make of Macron when they meet. As a first and immediate step, refugees in Northern France need safe and dignified accommodation to survive the freezing French winter.

"May must also demand Macron ends the French police' excessive force and violence against refugees. A portion of the millions of pounds given to France by the UK every year must be used to protect those in Calais, not harm them, through investment in anti-trafficking and anti-exploitation policing."

Notes:

1. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/emmanuel-macron-refugees-theresa-may-europe-brexit-eu-calais-camp-jungle-pay-border-a8160236.html>
2. <https://helprefugees.org/preventable-deaths-calais-border/>

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