

Green Party calls for insulation grants to help small businesses survive cost of living crisis



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The Green Party of England and Wales is calling on government to offer a Small Business Saturday reprieve to firms facing soaring costs through insulation grants and a package of support measures.

Co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“We know from visiting independent businesses and social enterprises up and down the country that they want to green their operations, improve employee welfare and make it easier for people to shop locally.

“But they need government to get behind them and offer the right package of incentives.

“Businesses tell our councillors that they want government insulation grants, reform of business rates to incentivise greener business practices, differential VAT rates to favour small businesses, and an immediate suspension of Covid-loan repayments.

“Small and independent businesses and enterprises are the lifeblood of local communities. Small businesses can help revitalise our high streets.

“Yet, many are struggling with the cost of living and high energy bills. Running costs are set to increase again in March when the government’s short-term support will end.

“The Green Party has long been the party of small business. We want to see them thrive.”

This Small Business Saturday the Green Party are calling for:

1. Grants to insulate small businesses to cut energy bills and emissions. Government should provide businesses with grants to insulate their premises to reduce their running costs, energy use, and emissions for good.
2. Higher business rate exemption for small businesses that green their operations. Businesses should be incentivised to green their operations by not having to pay higher business rates as a result of taking sustainable measures such as installing solar panels.

3. Support for small businesses to improve employee wellbeing. Government must support businesses to improve the wellbeing of their employees. Measures should include exempting all childcare providers in England from business rates.
4. Reform of VAT to support small businesses and suspension of Covid repayments. The government must reform our VAT system so that it differentially supports smaller shops and businesses compared to larger and online businesses. Likewise, there should be an immediate suspension of Covid loan repayments to provide much needed relief for businesses.
5. Creation of Virtual High Streets. Councils should work with small and independent businesses so residents can use an online portal to buy from participating local shops and have items delivered on the same or next day.

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