

Green Party criticises Labour U-turn on free social care pledge



25 June 2021

The Green Party has criticised the apparent U-turn by Labour on its pledge to provide free social care. It comes in the wake of comments by Shadow Cabinet Minister and MP for Bristol West Thangam Debbonaire, who said fulfilling the Labour promise to disabled and older people would be too expensive.[1]

Peter Cranie, the Green Party's Health, Social Care and Public Health spokesperson reacted by saying:

"The Greens have always advocated for a move towards an integrated health and social care programme with an explicit commitment that people should not have to sell their homes to pay for care.

"We can't get away from the fact that more funding is needed in social care – even under the current system. The Conservatives, and now Labour, are trying to swerve the issue entirely so they don't have to address where the extra money will come from. When the country is crying out for principled opposition, Labour is providing none in order to avoid talking about tax or cutting wildly overinflated budgets like defence.

"The NHS was the health legacy of the second world war and there is an opportunity now to make a social care programme that is actually linked in with health care and provides people with the support they need, a legacy of the recovery from the Covid pandemic."

Among other social care commitments, the Green Party would invest £4.5 billion a year to fund council provision of free social care for people over 65 who need support in their own homes.

The Greens are also the only major party to back a 15% rise in pay for NHS healthcare workers.[2]

Carla Denyer, the Green Party's Housing and Communities spokesperson and MP candidate for Bristol West, said:

"To see this U-turn from Labour is a real kick in the teeth for disabled people and the older people in our communities. Our policies on social care – just like all our policies in the Green Party – are based on giving people the opportunities and support that they're entitled to, that are fair and offer dignity, not on whether the Tories will criticise us for them. That's no way to do politics!"

ENDS

[1]<https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/labour-says-calling-for-free-social-care-would-just-give-tories-a-stick-to-beat-us-with/>

[2]<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2021/03/06/green-party-supports-calls-for-15-pay-rise-for-nhs-workers/>

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