

Green Party: Parties must unite to stop Tories wrecking Britain



19 April 2017

The co-leaders of the Green Party, Caroline Lucas and Jonathan Bartley, have written to the leaders of Labour and the Liberal Democrats urging them to unite to stop the Tories 'wrecking Britain'. [1] Lucas and Bartley are calling for a meeting between party leaders to discuss ways to beat the Tories at the General Election and deliver a fairer voting system.

In their letter to Jeremy Corbyn and Tim Farron, Lucas and Bartley listed a 'crumbling NHS' and a 'bleak future for young people' as reasons for parties to work together. They also said that working together is key to prevent an 'extreme' Brexit inspired by the Tories, UKIP and the DUP.

The call from the Green Party comes after senior figures in Labour – Lisa Nandy, Clive Lewis and Jonathan Reynolds – called on their party to consider standing aside at the Richmond by election last year. [2] In that election the Green Party stood aside, helping the Liberal Democrats defeat UKIP-backed Zac Goldsmith.

The Green Party expects to stand in seats in 'every corner of the UK' in the General Election on June 8th – but are asking Farron and Corbyn to explore options to stand the best chance of beating the Conservatives. At their recent conference the Green Party membership instructed their leaders to explore electoral alliances with other parties to beat the Tories. [3]

Caroline Lucas and Jonathan Bartley will make further announcements in the coming weeks on their plans, but insist that any agreement between parties must be made at a local level by ordinary members who share an interest in defeating the Conservatives.

Caroline Lucas said:

"Britain is at a crossroads – and this election will dictate the very future of our country. The Green Party will be standing on a unique policy platform – opposing the Tories' Brexit and putting forward big ideas for a fairer economy and the protection of our environment. Our call for a meeting between party leaders isn't about the Greens standing aside – it's about giving people in this country the best possible chance of defeating the Conservatives and bringing in a truly democratic voting system.

"For the sake of our NHS, our welfare state and our environment we need progressive party leaders to ditch partisan politics just for a moment and think about how we can best stop the Tories from wrecking our country for generations to come."

Notes:

[1] Full letter:

Dear Jeremy and Tim,

We are getting in touch to invite you to meet with us to discuss ways to stop the Tories wrecking our country in the context of the forthcoming general election.

Greens have a powerful and compelling vision for building a better, bolder Britain and, like you, will be using the election to set out our policies and ask for voters' support. However, we also continue to believe there is a role for some form of cooperation in a handful of seats to create the best possible chance of beating the Tories and, crucially, of thereby delivering a fairer voting system. The latter is critical if we want to build the better politics to which both of you have said you are committed. We are deeply concerned too about the prospect of a further Conservative majority and the impact on our crumbling NHS, the housing crisis, the environment and what for young people is a bleak and uncertain future.

We'd like to meet to explore the best options for beating the Tories in June.

We understand that, in the immediate run up to an election, signalling a willingness to work with other parties might be difficult but we hope you'll agree that the times we are living in require leaders to be courageous and visionary, to actively build a more positive politics. Britain is at a crossroads – and this election will dictate the very future of our country. Many of the public want us to join forces to help stop the Tories from further wrecking our country for generations to come and we hope you will be willing to at least take the first step and meet with us.

Best wishes, Caroline and Jonathan

[2] Lewis, Nandy and Reynolds call for Labour to stand aside in Richmond:
<http://labourlist.org/2016/10/lewis-nandy-and-reynolds-lets-make-this-a-referendum-on-goldsmith-not-heathrow/>

[3] Green Party Conference backs electoral alliance:

<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2017/04/caroline-lucas-i-think-what-justin-trudeau-did-was-absolutely-outrageous>

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