

Green Party to increase Living Wage to £12 for all workers over the age of 16



17 November 2019

The Green Party will increase the Living Wage to £12 for all workers as part of its radical plans to tackle poverty and improve wellbeing, it has announced today.

The proposal will end the Government's fudge in calling their minimum wage a 'National Living Wage' by bringing all workers up to the necessary level of pay for a decent life.

The higher rate for the Green Living Wage compared with all other previous suggestions comes from a more realistic estimate of housing costs for families and the need for a buffer for unexpected and seasonal costs, like home repairs and school uniforms.

The proposals also make a commitment to extending the £12 living wage to those under the ages of 18, 21, and 25, and to include apprentices, to end the discrimination against young workers and trainees.

Under the current system, the minimum wage for under-18s is £4.35, for 18 to 20-year-olds it is £6.15, and for 21 to 24-year-olds it is £7.71, while apprentices can be paid as little as £3.90. The national rate for those aged over 25 is £8.21, while the Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage rate is now £9.30 outside London.

The Green Living Wage would be phased in over two years and would mean those aged 18-21 would see an increase of £5.85 in their hourly wage by April 2022.

Sian Berry, co-leader of The Green Party, said:

“The Living Wage must mean what it says on the tin, and the Government has made a mockery of this concept by simply renaming the minimum wage, while not using the evidence to set the rate at a level people can build a life on. I’m proud that the Green Party will set this right and make sure all workers in the UK receive at least £12 an hour.

“The Green Party will end the discrimination against young people where it is legal to pay under-21s a genuine pittance for doing exactly the same work as someone older. It isn’t fair, it doesn’t make sense, and it must stop.

“What message does that send to young people? That their time is worth half someone else’s? Everyone, no matter how young or old they are, deserves to be paid enough to live a decent life.

“The Living Wage is another example of how Greens lead and others follow. In our 2015 manifesto, we were the only party to promise a Living Wage of £10 an hour by 2020, while Labour only wanted £8 an hour, below what even the Conservatives have in place now. This election, all the political parties claim to be offering a Living Wage, but only the Green Party is using the evidence to set the rate at the right level.”

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