

Greens set out fairer, Greener plan for economy ahead of Spring Budget



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The Green Party has set out its plans for a fairer, Greener economy ahead of the Spring Budget on Wednesday, 15 March..

As thousands of workers prepare to go out on strike on the day the Chancellor announces his latest budget, the Greens have called for a raft of measures that would tackle inequality, help alleviate the worst impacts of the cost of living crisis and create the conditions for a more sustainable society [1].

Among the key proposals laid out by the Greens are:

- 35 hours a week of free childcare for all, from the age of nine months
- A £1 single fare on all bus routes across England with free bus travel for young people
- Meet the demands of public sector workers for a pay rise that matches inflation

Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“It is nothing short of a tragedy that 12 years of Conservative government has left us with growing inequality, huge cuts to our public services which have undermined our entire economy, and nowhere near enough action taken on the climate crisis.

“We cannot accept tinkering around the edges from the main two parties any more. Only the Greens offer the bold common-sense policies to transform our economy and the lives of people living in this country, and do what is necessary to tackle the climate crisis.

On free childcare, Denyer said:

“The government’s inability to deal with the early years childcare cost crisis is symptomatic of a Conservative Party that is out of touch and doesn’t see the damage its lack of concern for everyday people does to the economy at large. Meanwhile, Labour fails to offer concrete proposals to offer people hope.

“The Green Party’s plan to provide 35 hours of free childcare for all from the age of nine months is a real and tangible offer that would make a huge difference to people’s lives, removing one of the major barriers for millions

of people to working in a fulfilling and rewarding job.”

On low cost and free public transport, Denyer said:

“A £1 single bus fare on all routes across England and free travel for under-22s, combined with major investment in buses and services, would mean buses work for people, rather than the profit of large companies.

“Subsidising public transport can result in savings elsewhere, cutting the costs of congestion, reducing health costs associated with air pollution and helping tackle carbon emissions and the huge costs we will incur from the climate crisis.”

On public sector pay, Denyer called for the government to finally meet the demands of health service workers for a pay rise that matches inflation:

“Thousands of workers across the country are going on strike, quite rightly saying enough is enough – it is imperative that the government steps up to the plate and give public sector workers a pay rise that matches inflation.

“It is inexcusable that we have seen a period of decline in real wages not matched since the end of the Napoleonic War. At the same time the ultra-wealthy have seen their fortunes grow as asset prices increase. While the current crisis is often labelled a cost-of-living crisis it would be better thought of as a wages crisis.

“In this context, it is no surprise that we are seeing a wave of industrial action across the public sector. The conclusion is clear – to regenerate our economy we need to restore our public services and pay public sector workers properly.”

On a series of proposals to stimulate green industries and reduce the cost of energy, Denyer said:

“The USA and EU are providing massive subsidy programmes to green their economies. The Chancellor must dig deep to accelerate the green transition, especially for energy intensive industries. We support calls by the CBI to offer tax breaks to incentivise businesses to invest in the green economy rather than to pay profits out as dividends.

“Meanwhile, changing planning laws to encourage the development of onshore renewables, with particular incentives for community-owned renewables, would provide a real boost for cleaner and cheaper electricity.”

Notes

1. The Green Party’s Spring Budget proposals “A Greener, Fairer Budget” is available [here](#)

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