

Green Party Deputy Leader calls for action to build climate resilience in response to Storm Eunice



18 February 2022

- Amelia Womack: “Extreme weather events that used to be once-in-a-lifetime occurrences are now becoming increasingly frequent and ferocious due to climate change.”
- Greens call for climate crisis emergency response group to prepare country for more extreme weather and accelerate progress towards net zero.

Green Party Deputy Leader Amelia Womack has urged the Government to see the bigger picture as storm warnings are issued across the UK today.

Amelia Womack said, “Extreme weather like we are seeing with Storm Eunice is only going to become more common as the climate crisis intensifies.

“People will rightly be angry with politicians who have repeatedly failed to protect them. The warnings have been there for years that climate change will increase the frequency and ferocity of storms, yet the Government seems complacent about the lack of resilience built into our infrastructure or measures to help protect or rebuild people’s lives.

“In fact, the Government’s actions investing in new fossil fuels are only making the problem worse, leaving ordinary people to try and pick up the pieces.

“The Government needs to support and fund existing local resilience forums to meet the challenge of climate change and undertake a climate resilience review of all our infrastructure. This is particularly urgent for the case of our electricity grid which we will be relying on increasingly as we move beyond gas.

“The Prime Minister should urgently convene a climate crisis emergency response group with expert advisors to prepare the country for more extreme weather and accelerate progress towards net zero.”

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Green Party demands banks stop funding climate chaos



14 February 2022

Responding to a report from Share Action that reveals during 2021, 25 of Europe's leading banks including HSBC, Barclays and BNP Paribas collectively provided \$55 billion to energy companies to expand oil and gas production [1], Green Party finance and economy spokesperson, Molly Scott Cato, said:

"Banks like HSBC and Barclays are chasing short-term profits at the expense of future generations. The climate emergency demands a steady decline in the value of fossil fuel assets but they are being artificially inflated by the billions banks are throwing at oil and gas.

"This wholly irresponsible action comes in spite of a report from the International Energy Agency that says investment in oil and gas fields must end immediately if we are to have even a 50% chance of keeping temperature rise within the 1.5 degree limit [2].

Dr Scott Cato, who is a Professor of Green Economics, continued:

"As a leading financial centre, the City of London must show global leadership in divesting from the fossil fuel industry rather than inflating it with further finance. We need financial regulators to take action against banks that are failing to meet their own pledges to decarbonise their portfolios and are instead funding climate chaos."

Notes:

[1] [ShareAction | 'Net zero' banks continue to finance oil & gas expansion](#)

[2] [End new oil, gas and coal funding to reach net zero, says IEA | Reuters](#)

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Caroline Russell reacts to Cressida Dick's resignation



10 February 2022

Responding to the news that Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick is resigning, Green London Assembly Member Caroline Russell said:

“The Commissioner has overseen a stream of appalling scandals, from disproportionate racist policing to the murder of Sarah Everard by a serving police officer and the defensive handling of the aftermath of the vigil in Everard’s name.

“Over the Commissioner’s time as head of the Metropolitan Police there were countless moments that should have prompted honest admissions of failure and real reform. Yet her tenure was marked by complacency and defensiveness over a culture of racism, misogyny, homophobia and discrimination.

“Black Londoners have been telling us for years about the impact of disproportionality in policing.

“We need reform of the Metropolitan Police that goes much deeper than changing the Commissioner. Discriminatory behaviour is institutionalised in the police. We need fundamental reform to establish a police force that Londoners can trust and that re-establishes the basics of policing by consent so good officers want to stay in the force and the ones who are behaving in this racist, misogynist, discriminatory way should be made to leave.”

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[Green Party reacts to end of UK fracking](#)



10 February 2022

Green Party councillors who have been at the forefront of the campaign against fracking in Lancashire have reacted to the breaking news that all fracking in the county is to be stopped [1].

The leader of Lancaster City Council, Green councillor Caroline Jackson, said:

“After a long and hard campaign, it is brilliant news that the final nail in the coffin for fracking in Britain has been hammered home today.

“Decades of investing in ever-more extreme ways of accessing fossil fuels has left us with a climate emergency and rocketing energy prices. Allowing

fracking to go ahead would have been totally unacceptable. There was never any way that fracking in Lancashire could have gone ahead without serious damage to the environment and it is an enormous relief and a credit to all those who campaigned against it to see the plans finally blocked.”

Fellow councillor and former MEP for the North-West Gina Dowding said

“Though this news is cause for celebration, this is not the end of the road. Millions of people are struggling with fuel poverty and rocketing energy bills right now because of the Government’s refusal to invest in cheap, clean, renewable energy instead of oil and gas.

“Yet just this week the Chancellor has backed plans for expanding the UK’s fossil fuel industry, which clearly has no viable future. We urgently need a plan to wind down the rest of the UK’s oil and gas exploration as well as existing fossil fuel infrastructure, and to replace it with renewable energy.”

Notes

1

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/feb/10/fracking-firm-cuadrilla-to-permanently-abandon-controversial-uk-sites>

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Green Party condemns stealth taxes on students



10 February 2022

- **Responding to IFS report, Young Greens Co-Chair accuses government of ‘pushing more students into poverty’ and presiding over a system ‘designed to extract money from young people’**

The Green Party has responded angrily to evidence that the government is making stealthy changes to the student funding system that will cost students and universities to the tune of £2.3bn.

According to the IFS, students will see hefty real-terms cuts to the value of maintenance loans, with the parental earnings threshold frozen at £25,000 when it should have risen to £34,000, meaning many students will not be receiving enough to live on.

Kelsey Trevett, Young Greens Co-Chair said:

‘It is disgraceful that at a time of rising inflation that the government has chosen to push more students into poverty by cutting maintenance loans in real terms. Making changes that will particularly penalise young working-class people while simultaneously mouthing platitudes about “levelling up” is dishonest and unjust.’ [1]

‘As well as creating intolerable cost-of-living pressures for current students, the changes will also see even more money clawed back from them during their working lives. The freezing of the student loan repayment threshold is adding to financial pressures on former students.’ [2]

Jane Baston, Co-Chair of Young Greens continued:

‘Our marketised education system of tuition fees and maintenance loans was designed to extract money from young people while leaving them in precarious financial positions during their studies and when they enter the workplace, especially impacting those from working-class backgrounds and traditionally marginalised groups.’

Green Party Deputy Leader Amelia Womack added:

‘The Green Party has always opposed the marketisation of higher education. We hold it as a matter of principle that education is a public good and should be funded as a public service. We stand by our policy of abolishing tuition fees and cancelling all existing student debts.’

‘We need adequate grant support for current students and to remove the burden of debt from young people as they struggle to gain a foothold in the labour-market.’

Notes

1 The IFS report says the rate at which the level of maintenance loans will be increased – at 2.3% – falls short of both the current level of inflation and predicted levels for the year ahead.

2 The recent government decision to freeze the student loan repayment threshold at £27,295 rather than applying the current rate of inflation means that a graduate earning £30,000 will need to pay £113 more towards their student loan in the next tax year.

3 More details on the IFS report:

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/feb/10/ministers-quietly-tighten-financial-screws-on-students-in-england-ifs>

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