

Green MEP says ditch nuclear jobs in favour of green jobs as costs and dangers of storing defunct nuclear submarines soar



3 April 2019

The South West's Green MEP, Molly Scott Cato, has said it is time for Devonport to 'move beyond the nuclear age' and transfer hundreds of nuclear submarine and weapons related jobs into jobs supporting the green economy, particularly renewable energy technologies.

The call comes following revelations that Devonport in Plymouth and Rosyth in Fife are storing decommissioned nuclear submarines at a cost to the tax payer of £500m [1]. The Ministry of Defence has been storing the submarines for dismantling, but the disposal has been beset by lengthy delays and spiralling costs.

Two and a half years ago, Dr Scott Cato produced a report which outlining how Devonport could sever its links with nuclear defence but maintain employment by transferring investment into sustainable jobs, making use of the skills and resources available at the base [2].

Molly Scott Cato said:

"The National Audit Office (NAO) has confirmed the dangers and huge costs associated with decommissioning our obsolete nuclear submarines. Nine of the defunct vessels still contain radioactive nuclear fuel.

"It is time to move beyond the nuclear age, end the terrible risks associated with it and stop saddling the UK tax payer with huge costs.

"There are arguments about the UK's nuclear weapons system supporting thousands of high-quality jobs in the UK, including at Devonport in Plymouth. But there needn't be job losses if we ditch our nuclear submarines and defence system. We can sustain thousands of high-quality and skilled jobs – as well as creating many new ones – if we switch those jobs from nuclear defence to green and socially useful work.

"Our climate emergency demands urgent action. The workforce at our nuclear bases have skills that are transferable into working with renewable energy technologies, and by doing so contribute to tackling climate change. How much better it would be for Devonport to help create a safe and sustainable future than continue down the nuclear path."

Notes

[1]<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-47792539>

[2]<https://mollymep.org.uk/2016/11/16/devonport/>

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[Green Party thanks MEPs as EU parliamentary term ends](#)



29 March 2019

As the current EU Parliament term ends the Green Party has thanked its MEPs for all their hard work to date and reinforced its commitment to continue to fight for a better Europe.

London MEP Jean Lambert and South East MEP Keith Taylor will both retire after serving on the European Parliament for 20 years and nine years respectively. Molly Scott Cato, MEP for the South West since 2014, will stand for re-election in the event the UK takes part in the upcoming EU elections.

Jean, Keith and Molly, along with former Green MEP Caroline Lucas, have published a book recording 20 years of Greens in the European Parliament titled 'Greens For a Better Europe'. [1]

Jonathan Bartley and Sian Berry AM, co-leaders of the Green Party, Amelia Womack, deputy leader of the Green Party, and Caroline Lucas MP said:

“Green MEPs have shown that having a Green in the room can change everything. While the other parties fail to answer the great questions of our time – from Brexit, to the housing crisis or the threat of climate change – Molly, Keith and Jean have been at work making change happen. They have helped craft air pollution laws which saw the UK Government taken to court, forced the Government to publish its Brexit impact studies and improved and defended vital working rights. All while working together with our European neighbours to build a reformed Europe where we can all thrive.

“As we enter the next European election period it's with great sadness we say goodbye to Keith and Jean as they retire – but we are confident in the knowledge there are Greens across England and Wales ready to fight with Molly for a better Europe. Our brilliant Green MEPs are a formidable force for good in the European Parliament and we will continue to work towards the Europe and Britain we know is possible.”

Notes:

1. <https://www.waterstones.com/book/greens-for-a-better-europe/liam-ward//9781907994883>

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[Green deputy leader backs Monbiot's acclaim of ecocide campaigner](#)



28 March 2019

Green Party of England and Wales deputy leader Amelia Womack [1] backed George Monbiot's championing on Polly Higgins and her efforts to make ecocide a recognised international crime [2].

Womack has worked with the End Ecocide campaign to work to collect a million signatures from across Europe for a European Citizens Initiative, and has spoken at press conferences for the campaign.

Womack said:

"Polly is a pioneer – working to ensure that our planet is protected by clear legislation that would dramatically change the way that business and governments have to operate. Her vision and leadership are inspirational.

"I met Polly in 2013 and she inspired me to write my MSc thesis on Ecocide after reading her book 'Earth is Our Business'. Not only is she an incredible and thought provoking writer, but the vision she outlined for a better planet has stayed with me. She has influenced me politically, outlining how we need a change in policy to press a reset button on our institutionalised environmentally destructive practices. I am proud that the Green Party has followed her lead and embedded ending ecocide into our policies.

"In an era of record temperatures [3], mass extinction and when plastic pollution is entering our food chain, her campaign to end ecocide is more relevant than ever. Her vision is one that will continue to spur on generations of environmentalists, and challenge the operations of governments and business."

Notes

[1] Amelia Womack is the Green party candidate in the Newport West by-

election

[2] <https://bit.ly/2V0c02x>

[3] <https://bit.ly/2TACwC2>

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[Caroline Lucas and Clive Lewis table Green New Deal Bill](#)



26 March 2019

Labour's Shadow Treasury Minister Clive Lewis and Green Party MP Caroline Lucas will today table a Private Members' Bill that would force the Government to enact a 'Green New Deal'.

The 'Decarbonisation and Economic Strategy Bill' would place duties on ministers to introduce a radical 10-year strategy for public investment designed to decarbonise the economy and eradicate inequality. It would require ministers to empower communities and workers to transition from high-carbon to low and zero-carbon industries, introduce stricter environmental regulations and protect and restore natural habitats.

Caroline co-founded the UK's Green New Deal Group 10 years ago, and US Senator Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has recently reinvigorated the idea in the US. It takes its inspiration from Roosevelt's New Deal of the 1930s, which used massive investment in jobs and infrastructure to pull the US out of the Great Depression.

A Green New Deal would involve huge investment in clean energy, warm homes and affordable public transport – delivering a decent, well-paid job to everyone who wants one, and tackling climate change.

Labour members recently launched a grassroots campaign called Labour for a Green New Deal, to encourage the party to adopt a similar policy.

Today will be the first time a Bill designed to enact a Green New Deal has come before Parliament, and it is expected to gain cross-party support.

It comes in the wake of this month's global school strikes, which saw more than 50,000 young people join protests across the UK calling for action to tackle climate breakdown.

Green Party MP Caroline Lucas said:

“Our climate and our society are in crisis – but our Government is failing to act. It is now clear that we need a bold and radical plan to fight the climate crisis at the scale that scientists say is necessary. To do that we need to transform our economy and society at the speed necessary to prevent climate breakdown. We need to do what is required of us – not simply what is seen as politically possible.

“Young people understand the scale of the economic transformation we need to secure our futures. It’s time the Government woke up to the climate emergency and the UK’s grotesque levels of inequality and enacted a Green New Deal.”

Labour’s Shadow Treasury Minister for Sustainable Economics, Clive Lewis, said:

“The physics is clear. We must cut carbon emissions by 50 per cent, within a decade, to avoid climate breakdown. As climate strikers warn us, the planet will not wait.

“This Bill sets a timetable that makes government, workers and communities the drivers of change, not the inheritors of chaos.”

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[Green Party responds to inquest of death at Colnbrook detention centre](#)



26 March 2019

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, has responded to the inquest into the death of Tarek Chowdhury at Colnbrook detention centre.

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

“It is devastating to see deep failures in the UK’s barbaric detention system are costing people’s lives. It is a stain on our national conscience that the UK is the only country in Europe to lock people up in detention centres without a time limit. It is time for root and branch reform of our broken immigration system – starting with these brutal detention centres. The Government must commit to a 28 day time limit for detention as a first step towards ending detention for good and building a more humane, community based

system.”

Notes:

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/mar/25/catalogue-of-failings-led-to-death-of-gentle-man-at-detention-centre>

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