

# Greens: Labour must commit to ratification referendum



20 April 2017

The Green Party is calling for Labour to commit to a ratification referendum. At an election event earlier the leader of the Labour Party refused to rule out such a poll [1].

Caroline Lucas, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

“Labour should immediately commit to holding a ratification referendum. If they truly trust the British people – and want to give them a real say over the future direction of this country – then they must commit to a democratic vote on any final deal. With the Tories already hurtling us towards an extreme Brexit the Labour Party should also make clear whether or not they support Britain’s continued membership of the single market or if they, like the Government, are willing to sacrifice this country’s prosperity at the altar of stopping freedom of movement.

“The Green Party is clear on our opposition to an extreme Brexit. We will campaign to remain a member of the single market and for continued freedom of movement and the protection of our environment.”

## **Notes:**

1. <https://twitter.com/SamCoatesTimes/status/855002311856459777>

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# Green Party: Rolling back foreign aid commitment would be a 'dereliction of duty'



20 April 2017

The Green Party has responded to Bill Gates urging the Government to

continuing spending 0.7% of GDP on foreign aid.

The Microsoft founder urged the UK to keep spending at least 0.7% of national income on foreign aid, saying it was proof of its goodwill and humanity.

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

“Bill Gates is right: cutting the aid budget will cost lives. Any moves by the Tories to rollback our commitment to international development would be a dereliction of this country’s duty to the rest of the world. We know that aid alone isn’t enough, and that it must come alongside fairer trading rules, but it is the bedrock of a credible foreign policy where Britain can play a positive role in world affairs. The Tories little-Englander approach, inspired by UKIP, sells this country short – and the Green Party will oppose any moves to cut the aid budget. Indeed in the coming weeks we will put forward a bold plan to step up Britain’s global commitments on aid, climate change and nuclear disarmament.”

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## [Green Party calls for votes at 16 in June election](#)



19 April 2017

Caroline Lucas, the co-leader of the Green Party, is calling for the Government to bring in legislation to allow 16 and 17-year-olds vote in the snap General Election.

Lucas, whose party will begin their campaign tomorrow in Bristol, used an intervention in the House of Commons today to urge the Prime Minister to give young people a greater say in the future of the country. There are 1.5m young people who would be eligible to vote if 16 and 17-year-olds were given a vote on June 8.

Evidence from the Scottish independence referendum, substantiated by research from Austria and Norway, shows – aided by the encouragement of families and schools – 16 and 17-year-olds have higher rates of turnout than 18 to 24-year-olds [1].

Caroline Lucas said:

"Everything is at stake right now. Our relationship with Europe, our border policies, our position on the world stage – voters will be given the chance to decide what kind of nation we want to be. The election is especially important for young people as they will live with the decisions made on June 8th for their entire lives.

"Theresa May should give Britain's 1.5 million 16 and 17-year-olds – the first generation to have received citizenship education – a say in what will very much be their future. The Government should urgently change the law to expand the electorate – using the remaining parliamentary time to truly hand people control. After trebling tuition fees, cutting housing benefit for young people and slashing the educational maintenance allowance – surely the Government should give young people a chance to have a say on the policies that are affecting them.

"This should be a moment when we hand control to people and widen the scope of our democracy. Let's trust young people with a vote in June – and let them have a real say about the future direction of their country."

#### Notes:

1. <http://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/votes-at-16>

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## [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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## [Green Party responds to John McDonnell on tax](#)



19 April 2017

The Green Party has responded to John McDonnell's refusal to say that the general level of taxation would rise under a Labour Government. Specifically he said that only those earning £70-£80,000 would have to pay more, despite just 15% of people earning over £42,000 and just one in 20 earning £78,000 per year. [1] [2]

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, called for an honest debate about tax to ensure that public services are protected.

He said:

"It's deeply disappointing to hear the Shadow Chancellor back away from a radical shakeup of the tax system to truly redistribute wealth and support our public services. The truth is that anyone paying higher rate tax is

in the top 15% of earners in the country, and we should be asking them to pay more to stop our NHS crumbling and our welfare state being destroyed. Indeed the general level of taxation in the country should be going up. That's why the Green Party will, in the coming weeks, reveal a bold tax plan which would provide Britain with world-leading public services."

**Notes:**

[1]

<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/economy/2016/11/no-john-mcdonnell-people-earning-over-42000-have-not-been-hit-hard>

[2] <http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/news/article-3621852/More-1m-people-say-earn-100k-year-nearly-50-000-make-1m-survey-finds.html>

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