

Greens gain first directly elected mayor – in Hackney

8 May 2026 / 8 May 2026 by [Green Party](#)

Green Party leader Zack Polanski has celebrated a Green winning the party's first elected Mayor.

Zack Polanski said: "These results are already our best ever and they are still coming in. Across England and Wales voters are putting their trust in us as never before.

"In Hackney, Zoe Garbett has become our first ever directly elected Green Mayor.

"Two party politics is no longer dying – it is dead. This is a historic victory for the Green Party.

"In Hackney and across England and Wales, we're electing Greens who have only two vested interests – serving their communities and protecting the planet."

Greens topped the poll in Exeter and have also had breakthrough wins in Chorley, Lincoln, Salford and Ealing.

Zack Polanski said: "Voters are creating these record Green results because we are the only party responding to their demands to take the cost-of-living crisis seriously. We are the only party with real plans to cut bills, reduce rents and provide genuinely affordable homes.

"I thank the voters have seen through a storm of hostile media stories and put a cross next to hope. We won't let you down.

"I have said we are not here just to be disappointed by Labour, but to replace them.

"Now we have clear evidence that we are doing just that. These are disastrous results for Keir Starmer and he must go. We are expecting more Green wins as the votes are counted but can already declare these will be our best local election results ever."

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Green share of the vote is up across England with high points in Reading 32%, Exeter 31%, Oxford 29%. This lays the foundations to win constituencies like Reading Central, Exeter and Oxford East at the General Election.

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Greens tell Starmer – the voters have spoken and he must go

8 May 2026 by [Green Party](#)

Green Party leader Zack Polanski tonight called on Prime Minister Keir Starmer to: “hear the call of the people and go” after early results showed Labour suffering a disastrous drubbing, losing the majority of the seats they were defending.

The call came after Greens made early gains from Labour, Lib Dems, Conservatives and Independents in places like Oxford, Exeter, and Peterborough and gained councillors for the first time ever in places such as Chorley and Salford. Nationally Greens have also seen a marked increase in vote share. Green targets will mostly be counting on Friday, with the Party feeling bullish about their prospects in London boroughs like Hackney, as well as making history by breaking through onto the Senedd for the first time.

Zack Polanski said: “These first Green gains confirm what I’ve heard as I criss-crossed England and Wales during the campaign.

“Voters are backing the only party taking the cost-of-living crisis seriously. We are the only party with real plans to cut bills, reduce rents and provide genuinely affordable homes.

“I’ve made it clear that we are here not just to be disappointed by Labour, but to replace them. These early results indicate that voters want to see that change too. That is why Keir Starmer has to listen to the people and go.

“Of course, many councils are counting throughout Friday, so it will take time for the full scale of the Green successes to become clear.

“However, we are on course for a historic breakthrough in Wales, gaining Green representation in the Senedd in Wales for the first time.

“We are very confident that we will gain many seats in London – and are looking forward results from Newcastle and Bradford through to Sussex.”

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[Greens poised for record local elections poll results](#)

7 May 2026 / 7 May 2026 by [Green Party](#)

Green Party leader Zack Polanski tonight predicted “a record-breaking result” for the party across England and Wales as polls closed.

Zack Polanski said: “I’ve travelled across England and Wales and I’m hearing the same everywhere I go – confidence that we will win more councillors than ever before.

“The news from the doorstep is that we will be taking seats from not just Labour but the Tories and Lib Dems too, from all across the country.

“Voters are responding to the fact that Greens are the only party taking the cost-of-living crisis seriously, with real plans to cut bills, reduce rents and provide genuinely affordable homes, as well as tackling the climate and nature crisis.

“Many councils are counting throughout Friday, so we will have to be patient to see the Green wins coming in.

“We are very confident that we will gain many seats in London, but we look forward to seeing results coming in from all across the country – from Newcastle and Bradford through to Sussex and of course, the Senedd election where we expect to make a historic Green breakthrough to Wales’ national parliament.”

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[Greens call for ‘boost for buses’ as Zack Polanski announces latest affordability pledge](#)

Greens call for ‘boost for buses’ as Zack Polanski announces latest affordability pledge

On a campaign trail visit to Newcastle last week, Zack Polanski told the media that the experiment of bus privatisation has been a disaster, and that a vote for the Green Party on 7th May is a vote to boost our buses.

The Green Party leader said Green councillors will fight to bring buses back into public control, and advocate for free fares for everyone under 22 years to make life more affordable for young people.

It is the latest in a series of pledges focused on ending Rip Off Britain.

Privatisation: “an unmitigated disaster”

Reliable and accessible public transport is one of the best ways to tackle both the cost-of-living crisis and the climate crisis.

Buses are the most used form of public transport in England.

But bus usage has seen a huge and sustained drop off recently – falling from 4.6 billion journeys in 2009 to 3.6 billion in 2024.

Zack said: “Years of deregulation have led to soaring fares, unreliable services and cut routes. Bus privatisation has been an unmitigated disaster.”



Zack Polanski speaking to the media about the Green Party’s policies to boost buses (Photo: Maria Maza)

Spiralling transport costs are one of the biggest causes of the affordability crisis – and it’s not just cities like Newcastle that are affected. As Zack said “lack of services and expensive fares are problems for rural areas in particular.”

In fact, rural communities in England lost almost a fifth of their bus routes between 2019 and 2024 – an even faster rate than in our towns and cities.

Once bus services are cut, many people in rural areas are left isolated or reliant on expensive private transport simply to get around.

Putting the 'public' back in public transport

So why has privatisation been such a disaster?

Well, whether it's our buses, or our water, or our trains – a private company owning a public utility has one main concern. Providing the best service for the public? No. Private profit for its shareholders.

Local councils in contrast know their communities, know their transport needs, and are in a much better position to plan and provide a proper service as a result.



Zack Polanski addressing a packed room of Green Party supporters in Newcastle
(Photo: Maria Maza)

As Zack said: “We need to bring buses back into public control so that local councils, who know what their communities need best, can put a ceiling on how much can be charged and make sure their communities are well served.”

“Electing Green councillors will help end this and herald in a new age of the bus, to help rebuild our struggling high streets and boost our communities.”

Get out the vote – sign up for polling day

After speaking to media, Zack was met by a packed room of Green Party supporters at a rally for the elections on 7th May.

And a big turnout of Green support will be crucial again this Thursday.

We can win big all over the country on Thursday – but we’ll need your help.

You can help us replace Labour and defeat Reform. Sign up for a polling day slot to help [get the Green vote out where you live](#).



Green Party

LE2026 High Priority Targets

Which
Green Team
can you
help win?



Find an action day: greenparty.click/actiondays

All featured photos: Maria Maza

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