

Green Party local election launch: time to unlock policies that will create hundreds of thousands of affordable homes



4 April 2024

The Green Party of England and Wales launches its local election campaign in Bristol today with a pledge to support councils to massively increase their supply of affordable housing.

Co-leader Carla Denyer, who is standing as MP candidate in Bristol Central, said:

“This country faces an acute housing crisis. There are over a million households on council waiting lists [1]. In England the average home for sale now costs more than 8 times the annual average household earnings [2].

“We desperately need a massive increase in the supply of affordable social housing. I hear regularly from people who have been living in unacceptable conditions, crying out for a secure home or struggling to make ends meet because their rents are through the roof.

“Councils have a vital role to play but they need a framework that supports them to provide the homes that people desperately need. We need to unlock the policies that will make hundreds of thousands of extra council homes available – for good. We also need a fair deal for the millions of people renting in the private sector.”

The policies the Green Party would introduce to help councils increase the supply of affordable housing include:

- Providing funding to councils to meet their needs for affordable social housing and lift the overly restrictive rules on council borrowing for housebuilding – ensuring at least an extra 150,000 council homes a year are made available through a mix of new build, refurbishment, conversions and buying up existing homes
- Ending Right to Buy, enabling local authorities to keep council homes available and affordable in the community for good
- Taming the private rental market through rent controls, in places where the rental market is overheated, to ensure a fair rent, as well as ending no-fault evictions.
- Creating a ‘community right to buy’, giving councils, housing associations and community housing groups first refusal to buy certain properties that come onto the market, including former social housing bought under Right to Buy; properties in need of energy efficiency

improvements; or any property left empty for an unacceptably long time.

Co-leader Adrian Ramsay, who is standing as parliamentary candidate for Waveney Valley – the area where Greens won a majority on Mid Suffolk District Council last year, added:

“Whilst our housing crisis is one of supply, it is also a crisis of housing quality, and homes too often being built with a view to developers’ profits rather than community needs.

“That’s why our Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price charter [3] would transform the planning system to ensure all new homes are built to the highest environmental standards, prioritising brownfield sites, while requiring all new developments come with investment in local services, such as extra school and GP places, better bus services and infrastructure for walking and cycling. [1]

Deputy leader and Green London Assembly member, Zack Polanski, said:

“London is far too expensive for so many including our key workers in the NHS, hospitality and other areas. The Green Party want to see a ‘Living Rent’, where median local rents would take up no more than 35% of the local median take-home pay. The fact that this is so commonly exceeded is forcing people into fuel or food poverty. This is a scandal.

“Greens demand rent control powers for London and a two-year rent freeze when we get them. We will also set up a Rent Commission to look at bringing down private rents.”

The Green Party will launch its local election campaign in Bristol [4]. Co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“The Green Party has built up a head of steam in Bristol. We are aiming for a record number of seats in the city and believe we could emerge as the largest party and leading the next administration. We go into these local elections with around 760 councillors on nearly 170 Councils in both urban and rural settings, and Greens already a governing party in 10% of all councils in England and Wales.”

Notes

1. [14,000 social homes lost last year, as over a million households sit on waiting lists – Shelter England](#)
2. [Home buyers in England face paying 8.7 times annual earnings: ONS – Mortgage Strategy](#)
3. [Greens call for Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter to beat housing crisis and protect green space | The Green Party](#)
4. The local election launch will take place on Thursday 4 April at the [Engineers House Conference Centre](#) at 11am. The co-leaders of the Green Party, Carla Denyer and Adrian Ramsay will launch the campaign and be available for

photos and interviews. Deputy leader Zack Polanski will also be available.

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Greens Repeat Call for Ending Arms Sales to Israel



3 April 2024

In the wake of the attack on the World Central Kitchen convoy, which killed seven aid workers, the Green Party have repeated their call for the UK government to cancel all arms export licences to Israel.

The Party's Global Solidarity spokesperson and former Middle East diplomat, Carne Ross, said:

"The death of compassionate humanitarian volunteers was an outrageous and avoidable tragedy. The cynical attempts by the Netanyahu government to portray the attack on World Central Kitchen (WCK) as an accident have been dismissed by those agencies trying to feed the starving in Gaza. Under international humanitarian law, this humanitarian aid is the responsibility of the Israeli government, yet they are keeping routes closed and not ensuring that those emergency routes operated by aid agencies are safe.

"It is clear that the Israeli government is violating the terms of the licences under which arms are exported and is failing to abide by basic international humanitarian law. It is a national shame that we are arming the Israel defence forces who are responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of innocent Palestinians. It appears that the deadly Israeli strike on the aid workers used a drone produced in the UK. This only strengthens the case for an immediate arms embargo.

"It is hugely disappointing, but sadly predictable, to hear calls to end arms exports coming only after Western lives have been lost. It comes too late for the thousands of Palestinian children slaughtered by western supplied bombs and bullets.

"Foreign Secretary Cameron can show global leadership during his talks with NATO leaders today by first ending UK arms sales and then persuading other NATO countries to follow suit. We cannot allow the humanitarian calamity in

Gaza to continue a day longer.”

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Green Party response to Attitude survey on the NHS



27 March 2024

Responding to a British Social Attitudes survey which finds public satisfaction with the NHS is at its lowest ever level [1], co-leader of the Green Party, Adrian Ramsay, said:

The high levels of dissatisfaction with the NHS are a direct result of the Conservatives deliberately running down health services and using this as grounds for privatisation. I hear all the time from people struggling to get an appointment with their GP; unable to see an NHS dentist, while overstretched wards mean people are left in corridors and staff are overwhelmed.

“Yet it is very clear that people overwhelmingly want the NHS to remain free at the point of use and available to all. They don’t share the Conservative or Labour appetite for creeping privatisation.

“The public also unequivocally backs the NHS being funded by tax, with almost half believing taxes should rise so more can be spent on health services.

“The Green Party has never had any truck with the profit motive in health care and believes in a fully publicly funded NHS. We can find the billions the NHS desperately needs to improve its services and to pay health workers properly. A tax on the super-rich billionaires and multi-millionaires can provide the funds needed to fix the NHS and so rekindle our love affair with our most cherished public service.”

Notes

[1] [Public satisfaction with the NHS and social care in 2023 | Nuffield Trust](#)

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Water companies increase sewage discharges – reaction



27 March 2024

Reacting to Environment Agency figures showing water companies increasing sewage discharges into rivers, Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“Water companies continue to be allowed to dump ever more sewage into our rivers, waterways and coastal waters while splashing funds at shareholder dividends and fat cat salaries for water bosses.

“The £57bn in payouts from the water industry over the last 30 years should have gone towards improving standards.

“Greens would end this failed experiment in privatisation, bringing the water companies back into public control so we can clean up this industry.”

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Greens call for end to arms exports alongside boycotts, divestment and sanctions in wake of Security Council vote



26 March 2024

Reacting to news that the UN Security Council has called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, without the US using its veto to block the resolution, co-leader of the Green Party Carla Denyer, said:

“The Green Party has been calling for a ceasefire since last October, so this vote is hugely welcome if long overdue. With Israel’s greatest ally the United States abstaining, the Netanyahu regime is more isolated than ever – and rightly so.

“This Security Council resolution comes too late for hundreds of thousands of people who have seen their families and friends killed, maimed, or seriously injured and their homes, hospitals and schools destroyed. Nonetheless, it

ramps up international pressure on Israel to end its deadly assault on Gaza.

“However, Netanyahu is not listening – the attacks continue. The UK government must now further pressurise the Netanyahu regime by immediately suspending export licenses for arms to Israel. The Green Party also calls for further leverage through boycotts, divestment and sanctions. This means withdrawing all public money from funds with investments in Israel and suspending beneficial trade arrangements with the country.

“Only a full bilateral ceasefire and release of all hostages can stop more people dying. Israel must immediately stop blocking humanitarian aid to Gaza, where their blockade on aid is causing famine and intolerable suffering. And only a ceasefire can allow talks to begin on the long-term political solutions that will bring peace and security to everyone in the region.”

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