

Green Party condemns ‘shameful’ government legacy of destitution



24 October 2023

- Call to reform Universal Credit, scrap two-child benefit cap and introduce wealth tax to tackle ‘inequality crisis’

Following the publication of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s report into destitution in the UK [1], Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“Thirteen years of Tory government has resulted in a catalogue of social, environmental and economic wreckage. And there can be no worse legacy than leaving almost four million people in destitution – a quarter of them children. This is an utterly shameful record for the sixth largest economy in the world and reveals that the UK faces a deep inequality crisis.

“But Labour is also failing to address inequality or offer hope to those struggling to meet their essential needs. Research shows that the two-child benefit cap impacts around 1.5 million children and their failure to commit to scrapping the policy leaves thousands of families impoverished. Likewise, their refusal to back a wealth tax will allow inequality to continue unchecked.

“Only the Greens offer the bold common-sense policies to transform our economy and people’s lives. We have long called for restoring the £20 Covid uplift to Universal Credit and doubling it to £40 per week, with equivalent increases for those on legacy benefits. This would raise the current rate from £85 per week to £125.

“The Joseph Rowntree Foundation is right: every family needs to be protected and to be able to afford essentials such as food and household bills. Ultimately, the Green Party supports the introduction of a no-strings-attached Universal Basic Income, funded through a more progressive tax system, including a wealth tax on the super-rich.”

Notes

1. <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk-2023>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/jul/16/two-child-benefit-cap-explainer>

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Green Party statement in response to Storm Babet



23 October 2023

- Green Party parliamentary candidate for Waveney Valley, Adrian Ramsay: “We need to shout from the rooftops about the impacts of climate change and water privatisation on flooding.”

Adrian Ramsay, co-leader of the Green Party and parliamentary candidate for Waveney Valley spent the weekend talking to people affected by the flooding in Eye, Suffolk. He said:

“The scenes and stories of flooding I’ve been seeing and hearing from Suffolk and Norfolk residents have been deeply shocking. This is not the first time East Anglia has been flooded, and it certainly won’t be the last. Climate change experts are shouting from the rooftops that these so-called ‘once in a generation’ events will become increasingly frequent.

“The Conservative government is letting us down badly. Not only are they not taking the issue of climate change seriously – reigning in on existing commitments – but they, and private water companies, are also failing appallingly when it comes to flood risk management.

“Before privatisation, public water bodies were responsible for flood defences. Now defences are at best piecemeal. This is another good reason to take our water industry back into public control.

“We urgently need a long term and coordinated approach. This can only be achieved with a water industry focussed on investing in plugging leaks and protecting communities, not on syphoning off millions of pounds in dividends to shareholders. And rather than bulldozing planning laws, as Labour proposes, we need to reassess planning regulations which still allow for new buildings on flood plains.

“It is clear we will need Green MPs in parliament after the next general election making the case for climate action and protecting communities.”

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Green Party response to National Infrastructure Commission report

18 October 2023

Responding to the National Infrastructure Commission's report advising that the UK's public transport, home heating and water networks are all in need of renewal [1], Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

"There is much to welcome in this report and it chimes closely with Green Party policy in many areas. We agree people on lower incomes should have heat pumps installed; that hydrogen has no place in home heating and on the need to block more incineration in favour of massively ramping up recycling rates.

"There are also areas where we would go further. We agree on the urgency of cleaning up our toxic rivers and waterways and modernising water infrastructure, but rather than this being carried out by private water companies – who continue to leak millions in dividends to shareholders – this much needed investment should be carried out by a publicly owned water industry.

"But overall, this report is extremely timely. The Conservatives have been peddling a false narrative about how greening our society will increase costs for households. However, the National Infrastructure Commission shows clearly that boosting investment to transition our economy will result in lower not higher household energy bills."

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://nic.org.uk/news/long-term-review-sets-out-pressing-need-to-modernise-infrastructure-to-support-economic-growth-and-climate-action/>

For more information or to arrange an interview contact the press office on press@greenparty.org.uk or call 0203 691 9401

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Green Party calls for immediate ceasefire to end civilian deaths in Israel-Gaza conflict

17 October 2023

The Green Party has called on the UK government to push for an immediate ceasefire to stop the mass killing of civilians in the Israel-Gaza conflict.

Carne Ross, Green Party spokesperson for Global Solidarity and former UK diplomat [1], said:

“As more details emerge, we are appalled by the brutality of Hamas’s attacks and its seizure of hostages. The release of those hostages, who include women and children, must be immediate and unconditional. Israel’s people have every right to safety and security.

“There are also civilians in Gaza who must be protected. We are deeply concerned at the civilian casualties from Israel’s military action, the imposition of a blockade for food, water and fuel, and the forced displacement of the civilian population. All parties, including Israel, are obliged to adhere to international humanitarian law and the laws of war. These actions are in clear breach of those rules.

“The only way to prevent further mass civilian casualties and mass suffering is for the fighting to stop. The UK must join international calls for an immediate ceasefire. At the same time there must be immediate access for humanitarian assistance to the civilian population and the resumption of water, fuel and food supplies.

“There is only one way to secure peace between Israel and the Palestinians. That is for a just political settlement based on the end of occupation of the Palestinian territories. There should not be a return to a never-ending ‘peace process’ that risks disruption by extremists, but an urgent and vigorous international effort to bring about the creation of a Palestinian state, allowing Israel and Palestine to exist safely within their own borders.”

Notes

1. Carne Ross is former head of the Arab/Israel desk at the Foreign Office and former head of Middle East policy at the UK Mission to the UN. He resigned over the Iraq War in 2004.

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Green Party calls on international community to urge restraint in Israel-Palestine conflict



13 October 2023

Responding to the latest developments in the Israel-Palestine conflict, Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“The Green Party remains horrified by Hamas’s attacks on civilians in Israel. Nothing can justify such brutal violence. Hostages must be released immediately.

“These attacks cannot be used to justify disproportionate and indiscriminate attacks on civilians in Gaza. It is deeply worrying that Israeli government ministers and spokespeople are justifying the denial of water, food and fuel to the Gaza Strip – this is collective punishment and is in breach of international law.

“Likewise, the UN has warned that Israel’s demand that the civilian population leave northern Gaza will lead to a civilian ‘calamity’ and has appealed for any such order to be rescinded.

“There is every sign that many thousands of Palestinians will die in Israel’s attacks and many more will be injured and displaced, along with massive destruction of Gaza’s civilian infrastructure. This is, again, contrary to international humanitarian law and is unacceptable.

“The UK and the international community must urgently call for both restraint and an end to violence. Destroying Gaza will not end the Israel-Palestine conflict. It will perpetuate the violence for years to come while risking a broader regional conflict.

“To isolate the extremists and find lasting peace, the only option is a political solution based on the end of occupation of the Palestinian territories. The international community must now turn this crisis into the moment where we insist upon a meaningful political negotiation to bring about this solution.

“The government’s decision to send military forces to the eastern Mediterranean significantly escalates UK military involvement in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

“It also risks the UK being dragged into a potential regional conflict, as well as sending an implicit signal of condoning Israel’s military approach in

Gaza. This decision must be urgently reconsidered."

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For more information or to arrange an interview contact the press office on press@greenparty.org.uk or call 0203 691 9401

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