

Greens urge UK government to rule out new fossil fuels in net zero strategy



28 March 2023

The Green Party has warned the UK government that a net zero strategy which offers a boost to fossil fuels would be a “grave betrayal” of its citizens and future generations, amid reports that its planned “green day” this week could include more support for oil and gas [1].

As the government prepares to announce its revamped net zero strategy on Thursday, the Greens have urged Grant Shapps, Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, to choose the policies that will bring the most benefit to households across the UK as well as to the environment.

Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“The government this week has an opportunity to introduce measures that will create a win-win for our environment and the economy at large.

“Instead, we are hearing reports that what should be a boost for households across the country, in the shape of cheaper, cleaner energy and a reduction in emissions, will instead be a boost for the climate-wrecking fossil fuel industry.

“If what we fear is correct, this will be a grave betrayal of households up and down the country who want cheap, clean energy that doesn’t cost the earth, as well as future generations who will wonder why more wasn’t done to tackle the climate crisis when we had the opportunity to do so.”

The Greens have called on the government to:

- Introduce a carbon tax targeting the biggest polluters to provide funding for a mass insulation programme and renewable energy revolution to cut domestic energy bills and reduce emissions
- Invest £25 billion a year for ten years to carry out deep retrofitting of ten million homes and provide insulation improvements for every home that needs it.
- Invest £12 billion a year for ten years on rolling out renewable energy including:
 - Paving the way for 70% of the UK’s electricity to come from wind power by lifting the de facto onshore ban and introducing new support and incentives to accelerate wind energy development
 - Introducing new support for solar geothermal, tidal, hydro and other renewables to provide much of the rest

1. Make solar panels mandatory on the roofs of all suitable new homes
2. A national programme to replace polluting boilers with renewable heat from

heat pumps

3. A commitment to provide no new investment in or permit the development of new fossil fuels

Ramsay said:

“Any claim from the government that burning ever more fossil fuels from the North Sea will help the UK meet its international obligations to become net zero by 2050 [2] has no connection to reality.

“Just last week, the latest IPCC report painted a grim picture of the future of action to tackle the climate crisis isn’t taken immediately. [2]

“The UK government, along with governments around the world, has an increasingly small window of opportunity to secure a sustainable future for all and limit global temperature rise.

“But with the recent announcements in the Spring Budget and reports that its own ‘green day’ has been watered down, this government continues to stick its head in the sand at everybody’s cost.

“There are huge benefits to be made if the government puts the right policies in place now. For example, the UK is seriously behind other European countries when it comes to installing heat pumps. However, new research has shown that we could reduce our gas imports by half if we installed them at the same rate as Finland [3]. If the government put the right long-term policy measures in place now, then we could see this sort of reward very soon.

“The government has a chance to achieve a win-win this week, but it looks like they’re going for a lose-lose-lose which will be bad for the economy, bad for our pockets and bad for the climate.”

Notes

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/mar/24/uk-government-launch-r-evamped-net-zero-strategy-oil-gas-capital-aberdeen>
2. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2023/03/20/green-party-response-to-ipcc-synthesis-report/>
3. <https://eciu.net/media/press-releases/2023/gas-imports-could-be-halved-in-ten-years-if-uk-matched-finland-on-heat-pumps>

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Green Party response to IPCC Synthesis Report



20 March 2023

Responding to the The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Synthesis Report [1], Adrian Ramsay, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

“The IPCC paints a grim picture of the future if action to tackle the climate emergency isn’t taken immediately. They point to a small window of opportunity that governments still have to secure a liveable, sustainable future for all and limit the global temperature rise to 1.5C.

“This report should be a loud alarm bell for the UK government, but it seems they’re just not listening. The Spring budget shows the Tories are asleep at the wheel when it comes to the climate crisis. Instead of investment in public transport and active travel, we got a fuel duty freeze; rather than meaningful investment in abundant and affordable renewables such as onshore and offshore wind, tidal and solar, we got the promise of expensive nuclear which will take over a decade to come on stream. And still no end in sight to the granting of licences for further fossil fuel exploitation or a carbon tax to make polluters pay for the damage they cause to our environment.

“The IPCC calls for action on climate change that also provides wider benefits. Greens have long argued that actions such as insulating homes, putting in place infrastructure to boost walking and cycling and a move towards a more plant based diet can all have positive impacts on health and address the cost of living crisis.”

Notes

1. [Scientists deliver ‘final warning’ on climate crisis: act now or it’s too late](#)

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Chancellor fails to address crises

facing environment and public services in Spring Budget, say Greens



15 March 2023

- Spring Budget relies on unproven technologies to tackle climate emergency rather than practical, Green solutions
- Chancellor fails to give public sector workers a pay rise that matches inflation, a pay rise that they deserve.
- Carla Denyer: “Only the Green Party offers the economic policies that prioritise health and wellbeing and the protection of our environment over unfettered economic growth.”

Responding to the Chancellor’s Spring Statement today [Wednesday 15 March], Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“This is yet another Conservative budget that fails to address the climate emergency or the crisis facing our public services.

“Proven and effective measures to tackle the climate crisis were glaringly absent. Rather than a nationwide insulation programme, that would not only tackle greenhouse gas emissions but also keep people warm and reduce their energy bills, we get big bucks thrown at technological fixes like carbon capture and storage which isn’t commercially viable and runs the risk of allowing polluters a free pass.

“And instead of meaningful investment in abundant and affordable renewables such as onshore and offshore wind, tidal and solar, we get expensive nuclear which will take many years to come on stream.

“The chancellor delivered his statement as thousands of workers walked out on strike over pay and conditions, quite rightly saying enough is enough. Jeremy Hunt failed to step up to the plate and give public sector workers a pay rise that matches inflation; the pay rise that they deserve.

“This was presented as a budget for growth. But we know from past experience that an obsessive focus on economic growth enriches the few, impoverishes many and wrecks our climate while trashing the natural world. This business as usual approach certainly does result in growth – growth in air pollution; growth in sewage discharges into our waterways and coastline and growth in

inequality.

“The sort of growth the Tories have in mind is revealed by their plans to create 12 new Investment Zones across England. Such zones will provide opportunities for tax avoidance by the wealthy, pit communities against each other – with those outside the zones subsidising services for people inside them – and undercut environmental standards.

“There were welcome incentives for small and medium sized enterprises to invest in research and development but where were the incentives to support businesses to green their operations, especially energy intensive industries?

“Only the Green Party offers the economic policies that prioritise health and wellbeing and the protection of our environment over unfettered economic growth. That is why our demands focus on restoring public services – especially our health service – and paying public sector workers properly; offering cheap or free public transport for all and measures to help businesses and communities reap the rewards of a move to a green economy.”

Ahead of today’s budget, the Green Party called on the Chancellor to include [1]:

- 35 hours a week of free childcare for all, from the age of nine months
- A £1 single fare on all bus routes across England with free bus travel for young people, combined with major investment in buses and services and to ensure buses work for people, rather than the profit of large companies.
- Meeting the demands of public sector workers for a pay rise that matches inflation, to help regenerate our economy and restore our public services
- Stimulating green industries and reducing the cost of energy, by offering tax incentives to businesses investing in the green economy and changing planning laws to encourage community-owned renewables.

Notes

1. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2023/03/14/greens-set-out-fairer,-greener-plan-for-economy-ahead-of-spring-budget/>

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Greens set out fairer, Greener plan for economy ahead of Spring Budget



14 March 2023

The Green Party has set out its plans for a fairer, Greener economy ahead of the Spring Budget on Wednesday, 15 March..

As thousands of workers prepare to go out on strike on the day the Chancellor announces his latest budget, the Greens have called for a raft of measures that would tackle inequality, help alleviate the worst impacts of the cost of living crisis and create the conditions for a more sustainable society [1].

Among the key proposals laid out by the Greens are:

- 35 hours a week of free childcare for all, from the age of nine months
- A £1 single fare on all bus routes across England with free bus travel for young people
- Meet the demands of public sector workers for a pay rise that matches inflation

Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“It is nothing short of a tragedy that 12 years of Conservative government has left us with growing inequality, huge cuts to our public services which have undermined our entire economy, and nowhere near enough action taken on the climate crisis.

“We cannot accept tinkering around the edges from the main two parties any more. Only the Greens offer the bold common-sense policies to transform our economy and the lives of people living in this country, and do what is necessary to tackle the climate crisis.

On free childcare, Denyer said:

“The government’s inability to deal with the early years childcare cost crisis is symptomatic of a Conservative Party that is out of touch and doesn’t see the damage its lack of concern for everyday people does to the economy at large. Meanwhile, Labour fails to offer concrete proposals to offer people hope.

"The Green Party's plan to provide 35 hours of free childcare for all from the age of nine months is a real and tangible offer that would make a huge difference to people's lives, removing one of the major barriers for millions of people to working in a fulfilling and rewarding job."

On low cost and free public transport, Denyer said:

"A £1 single bus fare on all routes across England and free travel for under-22s, combined with major investment in buses and services, would mean buses work for people, rather than the profit of large companies."

"Subsidising public transport can result in savings elsewhere, cutting the costs of congestion, reducing health costs associated with air pollution and helping tackle carbon emissions and the huge costs we will incur from the climate crisis."

On public sector pay, Denyer called for the government to finally meet the demands of health service workers for a pay rise that matches inflation:

"Thousands of workers across the country are going on strike, quite rightly saying enough is enough – it is imperative that the government steps up to the plate and give public sector workers a pay rise that matches inflation."

"It is inexcusable that we have seen a period of decline in real wages not matched since the end of the Napoleonic War. At the same time the ultra-wealthy have seen their fortunes grow as asset prices increase. While the current crisis is often labelled a cost-of-living crisis it would be better thought of as a wages crisis."

"In this context, it is no surprise that we are seeing a wave of industrial action across the public sector. The conclusion is clear – to regenerate our economy we need to restore our public services and pay public sector workers properly."

On a series of proposals to stimulate green industries and reduce the cost of energy, Denyer said:

"The USA and EU are providing massive subsidy programmes to green their economies. The Chancellor must dig deep to accelerate the green transition, especially for energy intensive industries. We support calls by the CBI to offer tax breaks to incentivise businesses to invest in the green economy rather than to pay profits out as dividends."

"Meanwhile, changing planning laws to encourage the development of onshore renewables, with particular incentives for community-owned renewables, would provide a real boost for cleaner and cheaper electricity."

Notes

1. The Green Party's Spring Budget proposals "A Greener, Fairer Budget" is available [here](#)

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Greens back plans to end HIV transmissions by 2030: A prize within our grasp



11 March 2023

Green Party conference today backed plans to end HIV transmissions by 2030. [1]

Green Party Health spokesperson Dr Pallavi Devulapalli said:

“There is a viable plan to end new cases of HIV in this country after 40 years of hard work and struggle.

“What a prize is within our grasp! To win it, we need the NHS and government to commit today to the recommendations of the HIV Commission, established by the Terrence Higgins Trust, National AIDS Trust and others. [2]

“That includes opt-out testing across every single NHS organisation to reduce the numbers of people diagnosed late with HIV. The latest HIV figures show a whopping 46 per cent of all people diagnosed with the virus were diagnosed late, with huge inequalities between different groups. [3]

“We’ve seen local authorities where Greens are in power working with their NHS to commit to the action needed. For instance, Brighton and Hove, where Greens run the council, is the first city in the country to adopt opt-out HIV testing as the norm.

“It means people with the virus will get diagnosed early, receive the treatment they need and cut the transmission rate. But the government is failing to provide the funds and leadership needed to roll this out across the NHS.”

Cllr Daniel Laycock, who has lived with HIV since 2018, and proposed the successful motion, said:

“Sexual Health is a core provision of the NHS. HIV testing should be routinely offered to patients in relevant settings, such as GP surgeries, Pharmacies, A&E departments, and in all sexual health clinics. Free home testing kits for HIV should be made available in all local authorities.

“Greens in government would invest heavily into a proper sexual health service, better healthcare for people living with HIV, and educational

programmes in the education system and healthcare settings, and would fight to see an end to stigma around HIV/AIDs and sexually transmitted illnesses.

“Ending HIV transmission by 2030 is within our grasp and we cannot afford to let the opportunity slip away from us.”

Notes

1. The full motion can be read here: <http://greencoordinate.co.uk/agenda/motions/ending-new-hiv-transmissions-by-2030-part-2/>
2. <https://www.hivcommission.org.uk>
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hiv-annual-data-tables/hiv-testing-prep-new-hiv-diagnoses-and-care-outcomes-for-people-accessing-hiv-services-2022-report#cd4-count-at-diagnosis-and-late-hiv-diagnoses>

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