

[Green Party slams decision to forge ahead with Heathrow expansion](#)



2 February 2017

The Green Party has called the decision to push ahead with a third runway at Heathrow airport 'entirely misguided and unfair', as the Government publishes plans for the expansion and starts a four month public consultation. [1]

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

"The decision to expand Heathrow airport is entirely misguided and unfair. It is clear the Government is prioritising the whims of the super rich instead of taking seriously the need to protect us all against the threat of climate change.

"It is still unclear how the Government can possibly meet the commitments it made in the Paris agreement while forging ahead with its expansion plan. Not only will this turn the lives of local people upside down, but it means the rest of the country will have to do more than they already are, in order to reduce carbon emissions.

"The Government should introduce a frequent flyer levy where those who fly the most pay the most. This would tackle both the demand and growing travel inequality, while providing much needed investment to improve our existing transport infrastructure."

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/feb/02/heathrow-third-runway-plans-published-for-public-consultation>

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[Press release: Time to Talk Day 2017: Prime Minister's message](#)

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Prime Minister Theresa May spoke about Time to Talk Day and how conversations can improve people's mental health and help to change lives.

[Prime Minister's Time to Talk message](#)

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

[Time to Talk](#) is an important day in our national calendar – a day when we put the issue of mental health at the forefront of our minds.

These problems affect millions of people – an estimated 1 in 4 of us has a common mental disorder at any one time.

Last month [I set out the first steps](#) in our plan to transform the way we deal with mental health problems at every stage of a person's life.

I said that the inadequate treatment of these problems was a burning injustice – and that we needed to deal with them not just in our hospitals, but in our classrooms, at work and in our communities.

From crisis cafés to online therapy, there is much we can do to remove the stigma that stops so many people seeking help.

Getting people talking to one another is central to that. Because, as the theme of this year's Time to Talk Day puts it, 'conversations change lives'.

It is this personal contact – a chat over a cup of tea; a heart-to-heart over the phone; a text message to check someone's OK – that can help free people from the prison of their own thoughts and help them to see a brighter future.

So many people – especially charities and campaigns, like [Time to Change](#) and [Heads Together](#) – are helping to get people talking and get these issues out in the open. But we can all do more.

Together, by giving our time and reaching out, we can end the suffering that blights so many lives.

NHS recruits being driven away before they've even started – Jonathan Ashworth

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, responding to official UCAS figures published today which show that applications for undergraduate nursing degrees starting in September 2017 are down 23 percent compared with the previous year, said:

"The Government have been warned repeatedly that cutting bursaries and funding for student nurses would cut off the future supply of NHS staff. Now we have the proof that those warnings were right – 23 percent fewer people have applied to study nursing this year.

"Misguided reductions in training places under the Tory Government, combined with a never-ending pay squeeze, have left the NHS dangerously short of staff. Patients are seeing wards closed, operations cancelled and treatments delayed. Now the new recruits which the health service so desperately needs are being driven away before they've even started.

"The staff are the lifeblood of our NHS. They give their all to keep the system going in the face of underfunding and mismanagement by the Tories. The Government ought to get a grip, show our nursing students that their time and commitment is really valued, and give them the support they need when they're setting out on their careers."

The quiet rise of the pound

When the pound was declining a bit more after the Brexit vote we got daily commentaries from the media on this and how they thought it was caused by the decision of UK voters. Most of the devaluation of the pound actually occurred between July 2015 and April 2016, long before the media thought we would leave the EU. There was a further leg down after June 23rd. Over the last month the pound has been rising against the dollar and the Euro. We

rarely get news of this, and the rise is not attributed to the moves recently taken to press on with Brexit.

If someone believes Brexit was the crucial variable when it was falling, why do they change their view when it is rising? Why didn't the pound fall this month, given the clear indication that the government does now intend to send the Article 50 letter and has Parliamentary support to do so?

City Road Allotments – fencing improvement

I recently welcomed the council's commitment to a proposed improvement to the security fencing at the City Road allotments.

I am pleased to note that the work to upgrade the security fencing is now well-underway – see below :

