

Caroline Lucas responds to Florence speech



22 September 2017

Caroline Lucas MP, co-leader of the Green Party, has responded to the Prime Minister's Florence speech on Britain's departure from the European Union.

Caroline Lucas said:

"After days of speculation Theresa May's speech was extremely underwhelming. Though she has finally started to face the fact the Britain will need to contribute to EU bill in order to unlock a decent trade deal, she still hasn't been honest about how much we'll need to pay. She should be less afraid of the hardliners in her own cabinet, and more truthful to the British people.

"When it comes to the transition period it is welcome news the Prime Minister finally has recognised this will be needed. But a cliff edge doesn't become less treacherous because it's two years away in the future.

"Continued membership of the single market and freedom of movement will be essential pillars of a successful transition and it's good to see the Government acknowledge this – but the Prime Minister should have laid down a real plan for the long term protection of the rights of EU citizens in Britain, instead of simply offering warm words.

"The Prime Minister also, spectacularly, failed to give any more details about the kind of Brexit she's leading us towards. The noises from some in the cabinet suggest we'll be cast out into the Atlantic begging Trump for a trade deal, while more moderate ministers reject this economic catastrophe.

"Theresa May is, in theory at least, this country's leader – yet like so many Tory Prime Ministers before her she's hamstrung by a group of ministers with ambitions, all of whom put furthering their views on Europe above the national interest, while at least one seems far more intent on his own prime

ministerial aspirations than with standing up for what's best for Britain."

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[Green MEP: May must show moral leadership and condemn Spanish PM](#)



21 September 2017

Green Party MEP Molly Scott Cato has called on Theresa May to condemn the actions of the Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy after his government arrested Catalan officials and used police forces to inspect the offices of newspapers and politicians. The move comes as Rajoy stepped up efforts to prevent Catalonia from holding a referendum on independence.

Green Party MEP for the South West Molly Scott Cato said:

"Spain feels like a powder keg ready to go off and it is up to those of us who believe in democracy to claw the Madrid government back from the brink. Theresa May needs to show moral leadership, condemn the unjust actions of Rajoy's government, and call on him to release the Catalan officials he has arrested, pull his troops off Barcelona's streets, and engage in constructive dialogue with the region's politicians. It's ten days until the planned referendum in but it feels like we have just ten hours to save Spanish democracy."

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[Green Party deputy leader to visit flood project in Stroud](#)



19 September 2017

***Green councillors instrumental in introducing natural flood defences**

***Amelia Womack, Green Party deputy leader: "Successful flood prevention means working with nature, not covering it in concrete"**

Green Party deputy leader Amelia Womack will visit Stroud today where natural flood defences [1] have helped reduce flood risk, 10 years after the severe summer floods of 2007 [2].

Green councillors Simon Pickering and Sarah Lunnon [3] have championed natural flood management and helped introduce the successful Stroud Rural Sustainable Drainage (RSuDS) project [4]. The council is working with farmers and landowners to restore natural drainage and increase water quality and biodiversity around the River Frome.

Womack's visit is the first of a series across England, where she will highlight the link between flooding and climate change and campaign for investment in natural flood prevention measures.

Amelia Womack, Green Party deputy leader, said:

"Floods are devastating for communities – they destroy our homes and belongings, damage our economy and disrupt our daily lives. Without serious action to tackle climate change, the floods we face every winter are only going to get worse.

“I’m looking forward to visiting Stroud to see all the hard work our Green councillors have done to prevent the needless destruction caused by floods. Successful long-term flood prevention means working with nature, not covering it in concrete. As the Stroud Green Party have demonstrated, with the right approach we can save our communities from floods while helping wildlife and cleaning up our rivers too.

“What Stroud’s councillors have done offer us a blueprint for the future. The only way to create a truly resilient flood management system is to work with the natural world, not against it by building concrete defences. I’d invite any one of our ministers responsible for dealing with the rising threat Britain faces from flooding to visit Stroud and learn from their example.”

Notes:

1. <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/flooding-and-drainage/stroud-rural-sustainable-drainage-rsuds-project/natural-flood-management>
2. <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/who/how/case-studies/summer-2007>
3. Simon Pickering is chair of the Environment Committee on Stroud District Council and Sarah Lunnon is a former Gloucestershire County councillor who now sits on Stroud Town Council.
4. <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/flooding-and-drainage/stroud-rural-sustainable-drainage-rsuds-project>

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Brexit isn't the silver bullet that will end live exports – Keith Taylor MEP



18 September 2017

Keith Taylor MEP, Green Party animals spokesperson, has reiterated his call for an outright ban on live animal exports in response to an investigation by BBC's Victoria Derbyshire programme [1].

Taylor, the vice president of the European Parliament's Welfare Intergroup, joined campaigners from [across the world](#) who came together last week in [opposition to live animal exports](#) [2].

The 'Stop Live Exports' awareness day events were organised by Compassion in World Farming and supported by the RSPCA and other international animal welfare organisations.

Taylor has been a long-term campaigner against live exports and has written an article [3] urging his fellow campaigners not to be 'seduced' by the idea that Brexit will put an end to the cruel industry.

Commenting on the issue, he said:

"Live exports are barbaric and the latest heartbreaking exposé is shocking but, sadly, the practices uncovered are all too common. I continue to stand alongside the passionate and dedicated campaigners across Europe and the world calling for an outright ban on this cruel and unnecessary trade."

"Live exports treat beautiful and sentient animals as 'goods' as if they're no different from a bottle of whiskey or bar of chocolate. Greens want to see it banned outright."

"All this suffering is entirely unnecessary. And, following the tumultuous EU referendum last year, there has been a misplaced buzz of excitement amongst British animal welfare activists that leaving the EU might finally offer an opportunity to ban live exports outright."

"Let's not get ahead of ourselves. Brexit is unlikely to be the silver bullet that halts live exports."

"The Government is pursuing an extreme Brexit with Britain outside of the Single Market. Ignoring the disastrous economic consequences and the loss of

vital environmental, workers' rights and even animal welfare protections – if that comes to pass – Britain will become an independent member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO)."

"As a member of the WTO, it's as likely – if not more likely – that live animal exports will increase rather than decrease. The WTO governs the conditions, rules, and regulation of trade between countries and governments. There are currently no grounds to restrict trade, as a member of the WTO, based on animal welfare objections."

"Other WTO member states, particularly those that profit from live exports, can challenge any proposed UK ban if they see it as a barrier to trade. Complicating this further is that it is entirely down to the UK government to explicitly include animal welfare standards in the language of future Free Trade Agreements (FTA)."

"We, therefore, as passionate, animal-loving Brits, need to continue fighting to strengthen animal welfare standards as members of the EU. We already have the necessary legislative tools at our disposal to help us in the fight – they were a gift from the EU, afforded to us by membership."

"We are stronger working with our friends and neighbours, and we can – and should – continue to fight as part of the EU with the strength that our membership brings."

Austria, Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands have all backed the [#StopTheTrucks](#) campaign calling on the European Commission to review and update EU transport regulations and, so far, the campaign's online petition has garnered the signatures of [over one million EU citizens](#).

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-41281570>
2. Keith also recorded a message in support of campaigners: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfdeGpXvFlk>
3. http://www.theecologist.org/News/news_analysis/2989275/will_brexit_spell_the_end_for_live_animal_exports.html

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Green Party co-leaders to join fracking site protest



18 September 2017

The Green Party's co-leaders will join a protest outside Cuadrilla's fracking site on Preston New Road in Lancashire today.

Caroline Lucas and Jonathan Bartley will speak to protesters at 1.30pm [1].

The visit follows the arrests of Tina Rothery, Green Party life member and 'anti-fracking nana', at the fracking site on September 2 [2] and three other Green Party members who locked themselves together outside the site's entrance on August 30 [3].

Lucas said:

"I'm joining the protests on Monday because it's abundantly clear that fracking is a dirty, destructive industry that will wreck the UK's climate ambitions and leave us dependent on fossil fuels for years to come. We know that the price of renewables is dropping fast, and it's high time that the Government stop their reckless dash for gas and focus on making Britain into a world leader in modern, clean energy from the sun, wind and sea."

Bartley said:

"It's an honour to join activists on the front line of the fight against fracking on Monday. Fracking is dirty, dangerous and expensive. It contaminates local air, water and soil and the community in Lancashire said they didn't want it. Instead of overriding their wishes and destroying our climate commitments in the process by drilling for gas we should be investing in renewable energy for the future."

Notes:

1. Other speakers include Simon Pickering, Green Party councillor and Ecotricity ecologist, and Stephen Hall, Greater Manchester Association

of Trades Unions Councils president and Unite the Union Greater Manchester Area Activists Committee chairperson. The fracking site is at Preston New Road, PR4 3PH.

2. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2017/09/02/green-party-responds-to-arrest-of-life-member-and-activist-tina-rothery/>
3. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2017/08/31/green-party-women-take-direction-action-against-fracking-in-lancashire/>

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