

Green Party deputy leader to visit Devon beaver project



7 November 2017

Amelia Womack, Green Party deputy leader, will visit England's first beaver reintroduction trial in east Devon on November 8.

The River Otter Beaver Trial [1] is a five-year project running until 2020. The trial is monitoring the beavers' impact on the landscape, other wildlife, water resources, water quality, local communities and infrastructure, and local farms.

Initial results reveal strong evidence for the role beavers might play in reducing flooding downstream, even during prolonged wet periods [2].

Womack said:

"I'm looking forward to visiting Devon, learning about the River Otter beavers and seeing their hard work up close. The trial is already producing promising results that indicate the role beavers can play in helping to protect our towns and cities from floods, while giving us a richer, more exciting natural world.

"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.

"But just a small number of beavers can have a disproportionate effect on the environment around them, influencing water flow, improving water quality and increasing biodiversity. Successful flood prevention means working with nature starting with our soils and land management which hold huge capacity to absorb intense rainfall, through to allowing more space for rivers and floodplains to behave more naturally, not covering it in concrete." "This is about working with the grain of nature and not battling against it"

The River Otter Beaver Trial is run by Devon Wildlife Trust. Peter Burgess, the Trust's, Director of Conservation and Development, said:

"I am so pleased by the overwhelming level of interest that organisations and communities from all over the country are showing in this fascinating project. Beavers are more than just charismatic animals; research we've been running with University of Exeter shows they can breathe new life into our river ecosystems, reduce flood risk and improve water quality. They can also bring great benefits to other wildlife. But there are potential challenges ahead, not least the possible impacts these industrious creatures could have on farmland. The Trial is looking at all the possible impacts, and exploring how we can maximise the positive and minimise the negative ones."

Notes:

1. <http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/river-otter-beavers>
2. [http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/sites/default/files/files/Beaver%20Project%20update%20\(LowRes\)%20.pdf](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/sites/default/files/files/Beaver%20Project%20update%20(LowRes)%20.pdf)
3. The River Otter Beaver Trial is led by Devon Wildlife Trust working in partnership with the University of Exeter, the Derek Gow Consultancy, and Clinton Devon Estates.
4. The trial is funded by the Devon Wildlife Trust and its members, Royal Society for Wildlife Trusts, Peter de Haan Charitable Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Wellcome Trust, The Tale Valley Trust, University of Exeter and public donations.

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[Green Party responds to “damning” report on Grenfell](#)



6 November 2017

The Green Party has called for Kensington and Chelsea Council to be put into special measures after the Secretary of State for Local Government Sajid Javid gave what they describe as a “damning” update on the Grenfell recovery [1].

In his statement today, Mr Javid admitted that survivors of Grenfell have “been failed” by a “sluggish and chaotic response” to the disaster. He confirmed that just 26 households have moved into permanent accommodation – 131 are still in emergency housing.

Jennifer Nadel, Green Party candidate for Kensington, has been working with survivors. She said:

“The government’s own assessment of the Grenfell recovery is damning both to the council and to itself. That they have allowed these delays and the anguish of survivors to continue is inexcusable. With 131 severely traumatised households still in emergency accommodation – often cramped and inadequate hotel rooms – decisive action is needed. The council must be put into special measures.

“Mr Javid’s report calls for more speed, innovation, and training. But nothing will change unless the attitude of those in charge shifts fundamentally – as Sajid Javid himself admits – from one of disdain to one of compassion. The council here have shown that is beyond them and that is why I believe it must

Notes

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/statement-on-the-grenfell-recovery-taskforce-report>

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‘Paradise Papers’ confirms UK at centre of world’s most extensive global tax haven network: Greens respond



6 November 2017

Molly Scott Cato MEP and Jonathan Bartley, Co-Leader of the Green Party, have responded to the ‘[Paradise Papers](#)’ – leaks that reveal new secrets of the global elite’s hidden wealth.

At the centre of the leak is Appleby, which styles itself as ‘one of the world’s leading offshore law firms with outposts in Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, the British Virgin Islands, the Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey.

Dr Scott Cato MEP, who was Green shadow rapporteur for the European Parliament’s Panama Papers inquiry committee ([PANA](#)), said:

“These leaks offer another disturbing glimpse into the murky world of offshore finance, used by wealthy individuals and big business for tax evasion and tax avoidance.

“Appleby’s website makes clear that they are actively touting for business from the global plutocrats who consider the payment of tax to be an unnecessary inconvenience.

“These latest revelations back up earlier details from the Panama Papers

which place the UK at the centre of the world's most extensive global tax haven network. In the UK, more than 75% of investigated corruption cases involving property involve anonymous companies registered in secrecy jurisdictions. And of these, more than three quarters were registered in either the UK's overseas territories or crown dependencies.

"If the UK is to have a positive future trading relationship with the EU, it is going to have to clean up its act when it comes to tax. The government should use the powers at its disposal to force British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies to introduce central public registers of company ownership and so end their tax secrecy."

Dr Scott Cato played a key role in the report from the European Parliament's PANA Committee, passed last month and due to be voted on by all MEPs in December. She said:

"The report of the Panama Papers inquiry has already come up with concrete policy proposals that could have helped prevent the dodgy practices identified in the Paradise Papers [1]. That another major leak has emerged before we have even completed our work on the last one shows the scale of the problem we face. We need a permanent inquiry committee, along the lines of those already seen in the US Congress, to enable the European Parliament to react quickly to future reports of tax avoidance, evasion and money laundering."

Jonathan Bartley, Co-Leader of the Green Party said:

"The Government has allowed the super-rich to get away with not paying their taxes right under its nose. It is time the Prime Minister took responsibility for the prolific tax avoidance it has allowed in British territories. With an NHS in crisis and millions of children are facing poverty the UK cannot afford to lose this much money to tax dodging. This is a global scandal and we need a UN summit on tax avoidance to deal with it."

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[Sheffield Green Party councillor responds to tree protester court ruling](#)



3 November 2017

Reacting to the news that Calvin Payne, an activist in Sheffield who protested against the felling of trees in the city by the council, has been given a suspended jail term, Green Party Councillor Alison Teal said:

"I am relieved that Calvin's prison sentence of three months is suspended for a year. However, Mr Justice Males left no doubt that campaigners who breach the injunction will face jail terms. The court has ruled that the cost of tree protection is our liberty, and Sheffield Labour Council want protectors to pay that price. It would be far better for them to engage in Alternative Dispute Resolution than to seek to imprison residents."

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[Green Party complains to Newsnight over sexual harassment coverage](#)



2 November 2017

***Greens: "The programme fundamentally failed to reflect or properly examine the seriousness of what is happening to women in Britain"**

The Green Party leaders have written a letter of complaint to Newsnight over last night's coverage of the sexual harassment scandal.

The show featured 14 men and three women and used comparisons to animals, including footage of animals of nature, to discuss the behaviour of men.

The Green Party yesterday called for parliamentarians to be sent to consent lessons as part of ongoing training to prevent sexual harassment [1].

Written by co-leaders Caroline Lucas and Jonathan Bartley, and deputy leader Amelia Womack, the letter to Newsnight said:

"The programme fundamentally failed to reflect or properly examine the seriousness of what is happening to women in Britain. We urge Newsnight to think very carefully about coverage of this issue, and to ensure that they don't let misogynistic tropes dominate their coverage again.

"The use of biological descriptions of nature set against footage of animals in nature was entirely inappropriate. It not only failed to challenge the

behaviour of men in positions of power but gave a defence for their actions.

"Newsnight gave very little airtime to survivors and women as a whole throughout the rest of the programme. To have guests comprising of 14 men and three women was unacceptable. To give the first half of the programme almost entirely to male voices showed just how deeply the programme's misunderstanding of the power play in society which has caused the sexual harassment crisis runs."

Notes:

1. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2017/11/01/greens-call-for-consent-lessons-for-mps/>
2. Full text of the letter:

Dear Ian,

We are writing to express our concern about Newsnight's coverage of the sexual harassment scandal last night. The programme fundamentally failed to reflect or properly examine the seriousness of what is happening to women in Britain.

The use of biological descriptions of nature set against footage of animals in nature was entirely inappropriate. It not only failed to challenge the behaviour of men in positions of power but gave a defence for their actions. Among the most concerning were statements from Evan Davis such as "there is something animal about men", "it's because it's so animal we have social codes to restrain that behaviour", "it is true that in many animals males gain evolutionary benefits from... coercing females into mating", and "in most mammals, including us, males have higher testosterone levels... and this may incline them to be more aggressive". Davis' assertion he was "not going to use any of this to exonerate men" revealed the lie behind this coverage and did little to undo the damage already done.

Equally concerning was Newsnight's treatment of how it deemed society has "dealt" with the male character it presented – in Davis' words, by developing "codes of behaviour to restrain naked sexual aggression".

Newsnight gave very little airtime to survivors and women as a whole throughout the rest of the programme. To have guests comprising of 14 men and three women was unacceptable. To give the first half of the programme almost entirely to male voices showed just how deeply the programme's misunderstanding of the power play in society which has caused the sexual harassment crisis runs.

Laura Bates, Shelagh Fogarty and Eliza Anyangwe were voices of clarity in an otherwise confused programme.

We urge Newsnight to think very carefully about coverage of this issue, and to ensure that they don't let misogynistic tropes dominate their coverage again.

Many thanks,

Caroline Lucas MP, Green Party co-leader

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader

Amelia Womack, Green Party deputy leader

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