

# Greens call for consent lessons for MPs



1 November 2017

**\*Deputy leader Amelia Womack: “So many in Westminster are utterly failing to understand the power dynamics at play”**

The Green Party is calling for MPs to be sent to consent lessons after multiple allegations of sexual harassment and assault in Westminster [1].

Caroline Lucas MP, Green Party co-leader, raised the idea of ongoing, compulsory training covering consent, appropriate language and professional boundaries during a panel discussion on BBC Radio 5 live this morning.

It is also Green Party policy for consent lessons to be part of compulsory PSHE in schools [2].

Amelia Womack, Green Party deputy leader, said:

“As the number of sexual harassment and assault allegations grows, it becomes more and more apparent that many have no idea what is and isn’t appropriate in the workplace. So many in Westminster are utterly failing to understand the power dynamics at play between male MPs, senior political party figures and other staff like assistants and researchers.

“We’re calling for consent lessons to be part of MPs’ induction into Parliament and ongoing training should be compulsory – starting now. The sooner we can end this epidemic of sexual harassment the better.

“Westminster is far from unique in its failure to tackle harassment, and these measures will not protect women in other workplaces, but it is a step in the right direction. Introducing consent lessons as part of compulsory PSHE in schools would make a wider impact and help keep the next generation safe from harassment.

“Westminster has an opportunity to lead the way and introduce mandatory training to prevent sexual harassment and assault in the first place, alongside robust reporting procedures where perpetrators will be held to account when it does occur.”

## **Notes:**

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-41806922>
2. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/leaders-blog/2017/03/03/cl-mandatory-sex-and-relationships-education/>

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## **Caroline Lucas: Callous Government still detaining sexual assault victims**



1 November 2017

Caroline Lucas has criticised the Home Office for failing to implement its own policy and continuing to detain victims of sexual assault.

Lucas called on the Government to stop “inflicting further misery on people who have already experienced intense suffering” in response to a report by Women for Refugee Women, which found 22 out of 26 women interviewed had experienced sexual or gender based violence and been detained.

All the women were detained after the Home Office ‘Adults at Risk’ policy, which states people most at risk of being harmed by detention, including women who have survived sexual and gender-based violence, should not normally be locked up.

Caroline Lucas MP, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

“These findings are shocking, and show a complete failure by the Home Office to act on their own policy. Just a glance at some of the case studies reveals the callous disregard for people’s wellbeing at the Government’s approach – and the urgent need for change.

“The Government’s cruel failure to comply with their own policy inflicts further misery on people who have already experienced intense suffering. Indeed the UK has one of the most draconian systems of detention of anywhere in the world. It’s inhumane, expensive and unnecessarily harsh – which is why it needs overhauling. The Home Office must immediately stop routinely locking up the victims of sexual violence – there’s simply no excuse for further inaction.”

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# Green Co-Leader writes to government over proposed deportation of Moroccan asylum seeker



27 October 2017

Green Party Co-Leader has written to the Home Office over the proposed deportation of Abderrahim.

Abderrahim, a 25 year old gay Moroccan man, faces deportation after his application for asylum in May failed.

Jonathan Bartley though has written to Amber Rudd, Home Secretary, urging her to intervene and ensure Abderrahim is granted asylum because it is clear his life will be at risk if he returns to Morocco.

Full letter below:

Dear Amber Rudd

I was concerned to recently learn of the situation of Abderrahim, a 25 year old gay Moroccan man who faces deportation from the UK.

It is my understanding that, after applying for asylum earlier this year in May, his case has been rejected by the Home Office, and has also lost a subsequent appeal. I would urge you to reconsider this decision and grant Abderrahim asylum in the UK.

Morocco penalises homosexuality with up to three years in prison, with eminent figures like the minister of state for human rights recently calling homosexuals 'awsakh' – meaning scum, or dirt. This is not a safe environment for a gay person.

Deporting Abderrahim to Morocco will threaten his safety and liberty, and he will be put in this danger purely because of his sexuality, along with his desire to support other oppressed members of his country's LGBT+ community.

In the UK, we are rightfully proud of our traditions of democracy, freedom of association, and liberty to live a free and dignified life regardless of one's sexuality. This is a time to draw on those traditions, and extend them to a person in need.

We should show compassion, and grant Abderrahim asylum in our country. More than this, we should recognise Abderrahim's efforts to support other LGBT+ people in Morocco, and applaud him for them, rather than needlessly condemning him to persecution.

Abderrahim has shown great courage, and is evidently deserving of asylum in

the UK. I urge you to reconsider your decision, and approve his asylum application.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Bartley,

Co-leader of the Green Party of England and Wales

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## **Case thrown out after Labour council attempts to jail Green councillor**



27 October 2017

A judge has thrown out a case against Green Party councillor Alison Teal for protesting against the felling of healthy trees in Sheffield [1].

The Labour-run Sheffield City Council had accused Teal and other protesters of breaking the injunction the council had taken out against them [2] and asked for custodial sentences.

Natalie Bennett, Green Party former leader, was in court for the hearing. She said:

“I welcome today’s decision by the judge, which confirms Alison acted lawfully in supporting the people she was elected to represent in trying to save healthy, valuable street trees. Sheffield’s Labour City Council has put considerable resources into pursuing Alison and I think the people of the city will be asking why it chose to do that.”

### **Notes:**

1. <https://twitter.com/helenpidd/status/923902485378600960>
2. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2017/08/15/greens-condemn-high-court-ruling-against-sheffield-tree-protesters/>
3. Protester Calvin Payne has been found to have breached the injunction and will be sentenced on Friday, November 3. The case against protester Siobhan O’Malley has been postponed for a week.

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## **Young Greens call on government to defend universities against 'campaign of intimidation'**



26 October 2017

Responding to today's *Daily Mail* splash 'Our remaineर universities' [1], Young Greens co-chair Sam Murray said:

"As an academic I find this witch hunt by the right wing media a frightening exercise in enforcing a pro-Brexit doctrine. Britain's universities are world-class, and our academics have a right to teach without fear of smears and harassment from the press. It's crucial that the government stand up for them and condemn this campaign of intimidation."

The headline comes after pro-Brexit MP Chris Heaton-Harris sent a letter to vice-chancellors requesting details of their teaching on the EU [2].

### **Notes:**

1. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5018251/Remainer-universities-An-ti-Brexit-bias-laid-bare.html>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/oct/25/chris-heaton-harris-mp-who-asked-for-list-of-tutors-lecturing-on-brexit-was-doing-research>

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