

Green Party: Escalating price must be final nail in Hinkley coffin



3 July 2017

The Green Party has responded to news the estimated cost for Hinkley Point C has risen by £1.5 billion.

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

“Hardly a week passes at the moment without new evidence that Hinkley is a terrible deal. The announcement that the cost of the Hinkley Point C Power Station has gone up again, this time by a staggering £1.5bn, comes just ten days after the National Audit Office confirmed what campaigners already knew – that the deal is overpriced and risky.

“The Government’s proposals are a rip off for taxpayers and consumers, and suck resources from where they are really needed: investing in clean energy and fighting climate change. This should be the final nail in the coffin for Hinkley.”

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-40479053>

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Greens Lead Cross-Party Call for Brexit Environment Bill



1 July 2017

MPs are calling for a new Environmental Protection Bill to be added to the government’s list of policy priorities for the year ahead as laid out in last week’s Queen’s Speech.

Led by Green Party co-leader Caroline Lucas, the environment amendment has cross-party support from Labour MPs David Lammy and Kerry McCarthy, Liberal

Democrat MP Layla Moran, the Scottish National Democrat MP Chris Law, and Plaid Cymru MP Liz Saville Roberts.

The [amendment](#), which was introduced last week and will likely be voted for on Thursday June 29, states that “in negotiating our future relationship with the EU, the Government should opt for the most environmentally effective way forward.”

This includes introducing a new bill to “transfer all relevant EU law into domestic law by way of primary legislation”. This legislation should include “the meaningful transfer of existing targets and to set new and ambitious targets” as well as provide access to citizens to environmental justice.

‘Conspicuous Absence’

[Speaking in the House of Commons](#) on Monday, Lucas said “a Bill on environmental protection is conspicuous by its absence. Given the significance of the EU’s role in environmental protection, I think that this is a particularly grave omission on the part of the government’s Brexit team.”

The [Queen’s speech last week](#) introduced this year’s legislative program, the majority of which is concerned with leaving the EU. The only mention of climate change came when the Queen reiterated support for the Paris climate agreement.

Since then Theresa May’s government has officially announced its deal with Northern Ireland’s Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). The DUP was called [“dinosaurs”](#) in Parliament by Lucas last week following the Queen’s speech due to their [history of climate denial](#) and denying the science behind evolution.

In a statement to DeSmog UK, Lucas said: “It’s astounding that the Queen’s Speech didn’t contain plans for a bill to protect the environment in the Brexit process. The Government is aiming to pass eight separate pieces of Brexit legislation, yet they’re leaving environmental protection behind despite 80 percent of our laws in that area coming from the EU.”

She continued: “I’d urge MPs from all parties to back my call for an Environmental Protection Act. Such a bill would both strengthen our environmental laws and ensure that a legal and regulatory framework is in place to enforce them.”

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[Green Party calls on Theresa May to oppose Trump's travel ban](#)



30 June 2017

The Green Party has condemned Donald Trump's reinstated travel ban and called on Theresa May to stand up to the president.

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

"Theresa May should show some backbone and lobby the US President ahead of the final Supreme Court decision expected in October. The international community has a collective responsibility for refugees. Those who are able to help the most should be doing the most – and leading by example.

"Watered down discrimination is still discrimination and Trump's arbitrary and narrow judgement about what family means has no basis in fairness or compassion. This is a man driven by the desire to appease his own ego, willing to ignore basic common sense and decency, and withhold help from innocent people – even putting many of them at risk.

"The efforts of everyone, in the courts and on the streets, who have resisted Trump's cruelty is heartening. We must refuse to accept such stirring up of hatred and continue to support all those who are fighting the president's actions."

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-40452360>

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[Green Party councillor vows to keep protecting trees despite threat of legal action](#)



29 June 2017

A Green Party councillor has vowed to continue protesting against Sheffield Council's tree-felling programme, despite the council threatening her with legal action.

Alison Teal received a notice on June 27 [1], where the council warned it would seek a High Court injunction to stop her and others protesting. Teal has been ordered not to enter or park her car in certain areas of the city, otherwise the council will begin legal proceedings on July 12.

Teal and six others were arrested in February while taking part in a peaceful protest against the tree-felling but charges were later dropped [2].

Teal said:

"I will not be intimidated by a council intent on trying to steamroller its opposition into silence. I'll keep protesting because this act of environmental vandalism is completely unconscionable and I know how valuable these trees are to the surrounding communities.

"Thousands of Sheffield residents have now spoken out in defence of the perfectly healthy trees under threat and their concerns have been completely ignored. Support for our work is growing rather than shrinking and not just from people who care about trees but people who care about democracy as well.

"If anything, the council's heavy-handed approach has fuelled our anger – it's completely unacceptable to be threatening residents with legal action, suspending opposition councillors and allowing dawn raids on pensioners all to continue destroying our green spaces. This is not what a healthy democracy looks like."

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-40417519>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/feb/06/green-party-councillor-alison-teal-arrested-at-sheffield-tree-protest>

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[Green Party calls for Kensington and Chelsea council leader to be removed](#)

from post



29 June 2017

The Green Party has sent a letter to the prime minister urging her to remove the leader and deputy leader of Kensington and Chelsea Council from their posts [1].

Their intervention follows the news that it is unlikely the final death toll from the fire that engulfed Grenfell tower will be known until the end of the year [2] and that survivors and press will be banned from tonight's council meeting in which an update on the fire will be given. The update will be given orally without any written record [3].

Green Party politicians including Sian Berry and Caroline Russell, both members of the London Assembly, Amelia Womack, Deputy Leader, and Jennifer Nadel, the party's candidate for Kensington in the recent election, have been providing support to victims of the fire. As well as raising questions from survivors with the government and local council, the Green Party has already called for an amnesty for victims – allowing them to share personal information without fear of reprisal – and pressed the prime minister to clarify how much will be given in legal aid to help survivors [4].

In its letter to the prime minister, the party said it is “unconscionable” that the leader and deputy leader of Kensington and Chelsea council could continue in their post when it is roundly recognised that they failed to deliver an adequate response to the fire and to heed warnings from residents about safety in the tower before the incident. The party urges May to take “strong leadership” and reassure survivors that they are being listened to and that those who presided over this tragedy aren't allowed to carry on with business as usual. and the public that actions are being taken to ensure this “never happens again.”

The letter, signed by Jennifer Nadel, and Amelia Womack, says:

“It is insulting to the residents of this community to see Paget-Brown and Feilding-Mellen remain in post. Surviving residents and members of the public need to know that strong leadership is being taken to ensure this kind of disaster never happens again. That includes ensuring that those responsible for guaranteeing the safety of residents at Grenfell before and after the fire are held to account and do not remain in post. Paget-Brown and Fielding-Mellen could themselves be subject to criminal investigations. It is unconscionable given the scale of the tragedy and the multiple failings of the council before and after that its Leader and Deputy Leader should remain as Leader and Deputy Leader of the council.

“The families of those who died at Hillsborough have had to wait almost three decades for justice to be done. We cannot let the survivors of Grenfell wait that long. So I urge you: please take action, show that you are listening to

the concerns of residents and survivors of Grenfell, and remove from post the council leader and deputy leader who have overseen this terrible episode in British history.”

Joe Delaney, who was a resident of the tower, said:

“We are extremely disappointed that neither Paget-Brown or Fielding-Mellen have shown the courage and humility to resign in the wake of this unprecedented disaster that occurred on their watch and was a direct result of policies they are responsible for. Once again, they hide behind platitudes and false assertions that they are somehow victims because of the justifiable anger and resentment being directed towards them by victims in particular and the community as a whole. Neither is forced to stay in post, so even if their colleagues in the Conservative group have allegedly refused their resignations they should still do the right thing and leave these positions of responsibility immediately. Not only would that demonstrate their regret and satisfy local wishes, but also ensure that there can be no question of using their positions to influence the inquiry and police investigation.”

Piers Thompson, member of the Save our Silchester campaigning aiming to protect the neighbouring Silchester Estate, said:

“It beggars belief that that Council leader Paget Brown and his Deputy, Feilding Mellen are clinging onto power behind locked doors at the Town Hall. This tragedy is a result of their incompetence and contempt for the ordinary people in their care. For decency’s sake, go now.”

Notes

[1] Full letter follows below.

[2] <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40434741>

[3] http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/grenfell-tower-council-survivors-meeting_uk_595437c1e4b05c37bb7bdad6

[4] <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2017/06/22/green-party-says-government-amnesty-for-grenfell-victims-does-not-go-far-enough/>

To Rt Hon Theresa May,

On behalf of the Green Party of England and Wales I am writing to you to request that you remove from post the leader and deputy leader of Kensington and Chelsea Council, Nicholas Paget-Brown and Rock Fielding-Mellen.

The response launched by Paget-Brown and Fielding-Mellen to the fire at Grenfell Towers was, as you have described it, “not good enough”. We now know

that in the hours immediately after the fire, the council failed to communicate with survivors and their families; did not put enough staff on the ground to give advice; did not distribute any of the money being donated to help survivors; did not find accommodation for surviving residents; and did not answer calls from neighbouring councils who wanted to offer support.

But the response to the fire itself is clearly only one part of this story. Kensington and Chelsea Council had initiated 16 investigations of Grenfell before the fire but none of these prevented the installation of flammable cladding onto the outside of the tower. The council also refused to listen to the concerns raised so consistently by residents about the safety of the tower and its susceptibility to the kind of disaster that occurred there on 14 June.

Lives have been lost and damaged by this dereliction of duty.

It is insulting to the residents of this community to see Paget-Brown and Feilding-Mellen remain in post. Surviving residents and members of the public need to know that strong leadership is being taken to ensure this kind of disaster never happens again. That includes ensuring that those responsible for guaranteeing the safety of residents at Grenfell before and after the fire are held to account and do not remain in post. Paget-Brown and Fielding-Mellen could themselves be subject to criminal investigations. It is unconscionable given the scale of the tragedy and the multiple failings of the council before and after that its Leader and Deputy Leader should remain as Leader and Deputy Leader of the council.

The families of those who died at Hillsborough have had to wait almost three decades for justice to be done. We cannot let the survivors of Grenfell wait that long. So I urge you: please take action, show that you are listening to the concerns of residents and survivors of Grenfell, and remove from post the council leader and deputy leader who have overseen this terrible episode in British history.

Yours,

Jennifer Nadel, Green Party candidate for Kensington at the 2017 election

Amelia Womack, Deputy Leader of the Green Party

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