

Greens call for Dubs scheme to be reopened as legal challenge launched



20 June 2017

***Co-leader Jonathan Bartley: "We believe that when someone comes to your home seeking your help, you do not point them to the exit"**

The Green Party has called for the Dubs scheme to be reinstated as a High Court challenge is launched today, on World Refugee Day [1].

Charity Help Refugees has accused the Government of failing to properly assess councils' capacity to take in unaccompanied minors under the Dubs Amendment [2].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

"In the last few weeks the British public have thrown open their doors to stranded strangers, defended people from heinous attacks, and rallied round to give donations of clothing, food, and money to those left homeless. So I know that when this Government turns away child refugees seeking sanctuary, they do so not as representatives of the beliefs or values of the British people.

"At a conservative estimate, 90,000 child refugees are believed to have been forced from their homes by wars in the Middle East – wars, let's remember, that we have played a part in. Of those this Government promised to accept 3000 but have closed the door at just 480. That's 0.5% of the total numbers seeking refuge. 0.5% accepted to the fifth biggest economy in the world. It's cruel and it's shameful.

"The Green Party fully supports Help Refugees' call for the reinstatement of the Dubs Amendment to allow child refugees a safe passage to Britain because we believe that when someone comes to your home seeking your help, you do not point them to the exit. When you have promised to do your bit to help the global community, you do not drop the ball and shrug your shoulders. Having witnessed the incredible spirit of the British public over these last few weeks I know that we will win this fight and we will create, together, a more caring Britain representative of its people."

Notes:

1. <http://www.unhcr.org/refugeeday/>
2. <http://helprefugees.org.uk/dubs/>

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Green Party statement on Finsbury Park attack



19 June 2017

The Green Party has responded to the suspected terrorist incident in north London [1].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“My thoughts and prayers go to every person directly affected by this attack and to Muslim communities right across the country. Once again our amazing emergency services appear to have responded with diligence and deserve our gratitude for their life saving action.

“This was an attack directed at Muslims but it was also an attack on all of us. In the past month, the people of this country have shown enormous resilience and unity in response to some truly horrific events and it is that unity and togetherness that will make us stronger as we face down these threats.

“This attack plays into the hands of terrorists and threatens to exacerbate a downward spiral of even greater violence. The prime minister must avoid knee-jerk responses that might appear tough on paper but end up handing terrorists a victory they crave: a curtailment of our freedoms.”

Dr Shahrar Ali, Green Party home affairs spokesperson, said:

“We are appalled and shocked by the heinous and barbaric terrorist attack on unwitting Muslims in the early hours of today outside Finsbury Park mosque. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those affected and their families, no less in the month of Ramadan.

Now as ever a strong, zero tolerance approach must be adopted towards rising hate crime directed at Muslims and all faith communities. The Islamophobic intent of the striker of terror today needs to be brought out into the open not minimised or covered up.

I shall continue to call out double standards amongst our media reports and politicians' half-baked statements when I see them. These biases only risk to exacerbate the problem and add to injury by fuelling resentment amongst minorities affected that they aren't being treated equally. Let's hear from Theresa May calling this latest terrorist atrocity for what it is.”

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-40322960>

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Green Party leaders respond to Tim Farron resignation



14 June 2017

Responding to the news that Tim Farron has resigned as leader of the Liberal Democrats, the leaders of the Green Party said:

"We wish Tim the best of luck in his next challenge. Though we do not share all of the Liberal Democrat's politics, we recognise the need for a powerful opposition to Theresa May and the DUP's regressive alliance and will work with Tim's successor where we find common ground to create a Britain that is open to all and a friend to Europe."

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Ending freedom of movement could result in 'meltdown' of health care, warns MEP



14 June 2017

Molly Scott Cato, Green MEP for the South West, has said Conservative and Labour plans to end free movement will leave the country struggling to fill

places in the NHS and care sectors. Recent [analysis by the GMB](#) shows that the number of EU nationals working in health and social care has increased by 72% in the last eight years and there are now 209,000 EU nationals working in the sector – up from just 121,000 in 2009.

EU nationals now make up more than five per cent of the entire health and social care workforce – including one in ten care home staff. The latest report comes hot on the heels of a leaked Department of Health [study](#) revealed that ending freedom of movement and clamping down on immigration would leave the NHS short of 40,000 nurses by 2026. A Freedom of Information request by Heart Radio further reveals the extent to which NHS Trusts in Devon and Cornwall are dependent on overseas nurses [1].

Molly Scott Cato said:

“The catalogue of evidence should be a wake-up call to the Tories and Labour who both want to end free movement. The GMB has called for an urgent post-Brexit plan for when free movement ends. But the surest way to guarantee our hospitals and care services are adequately staffed is to immediately grant rights for all EU nationals living in the UK to remain here, and to continue to allow freedom of movement. Greens are unequivocal on this – we will continue to defend free movement.

“While we should acknowledge perceptions around immigration were key to influencing the outcome of the EU referendum last year, people did not vote to see their hospitals and care services go into meltdown over a staffing crisis. If we are to keep our health and social care services functioning properly we will continue to rely on people of all nationalities coming to work in the UK.

“Where there are problems associated with free movement in the EU – with some countries experiencing skills shortages due to the emigration of workers – these should be addressed collectively by all EU countries, working on solutions together. What is clear is that one country shutting the doors on everyone else is a self-defeating policy when it comes to addressing the differing needs of different countries in Europe.”

Notes:

1. **FOI request by Heart Radio reveals** (provided by Carrian Jones of Heart Radio: Carrian.Jones@heart.co.uk Further information on request)

Cornwall Partnership: 22 nurses from the EU, 6 non-EU

Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust: 48 registered nurses and 30 healthcare support workers of non-British nationality. The Trust currently has nurse vacancies of 194.16 FTE (registered nurses) and 116.24 FTE (healthcare support workers).

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust: 116 nurses from overseas, 77 from EU countries

Other NHS Trusts did not respond or said they did not have such information.

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Green MEP challenges Gove over climate targets



14 June 2017

As MEPs today vote on important legislation that sets binding annual greenhouse gas emission targets for EU member countries, Molly Scott Cato MEP has challenged the new Environment Secretary, Michael Gove, to match or better these targets for tackling climate change once the UK leaves the EU.

MEPs will vote on the Effort Sharing Regulation (ESR), the EU's largest climate instrument regulating emissions of sectors not covered by the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), namely transport, agriculture, buildings and waste [1]. The legislation sets climate targets for each country for the period 2021 to 2030. But with the UK set to leave the EU before this time, Dr Scott Cato is demanding Mr Gove set targets at least as ambitious as those of the EU. She said:

"I can think of few people less fit for the role of environment secretary. He has consistently voted against measures to tackle climate change and infamously tried to remove the issue from the national curriculum when he was education secretary.

"However, I welcome the fact he has hit out at Donald Trump over his decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement [2]. Let's now see if action matches words and whether this apparent new-found commitment to tackling climate change means anything in practice. Let's see him pledge the UK to match or even better the rather unambitious targets on reducing emissions being discussed and voted on in Europe. Here is his first real test. Will he take a lead on tackling climate change or follow a climate denying US president wishing to drag us back to a bygone dirty fossil era?"

Notes:

1. https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/effort/proposal_en
2. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/06/13/michael-gove-says-donald-trump-wrong-withdraw-parisclimateaccord/>

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