

Green Party calls for votes at 16 in June election



19 April 2017

Caroline Lucas, the co-leader of the Green Party, is calling for the Government to bring in legislation to allow 16 and 17-year-olds vote in the snap General Election.

Lucas, whose party will begin their campaign tomorrow in Bristol, used an intervention in the House of Commons today to urge the Prime Minister to give young people a greater say in the future of the country. There are 1.5m young people who would be eligible to vote if 16 and 17-year-olds were given a vote on June 8.

Evidence from the Scottish independence referendum, substantiated by research from Austria and Norway, shows – aided by the encouragement of families and schools – 16 and 17-year-olds have higher rates of turnout than 18 to 24-year-olds [1].

Caroline Lucas said:

“Everything is at stake right now. Our relationship with Europe, our border policies, our position on the world stage – voters will be given the chance to decide what kind of nation we want to be. The election is especially important for young people as they will live with the decisions made on June 8th for their entire lives.

“Theresa May should give Britain’s 1.5 million 16 and 17-year-olds – the first generation to have received citizenship education – a say in what will very much be their future. The Government should urgently change the law to expand the electorate – using the remaining parliamentary time to truly hand people control. After trebling tuition fees, cutting housing benefit for young people and slashing the educational maintenance allowance – surely the Government should give young people a chance to have a say on the policies that are affecting them.

“This should be a moment when we hand control to people and widen the scope of our democracy. Let’s trust young people with a vote in June – and let them have a real say about the future direction of their country.”

Notes:

1. <http://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/votes-at-16>

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[Green Party: Parties must unite to stop Tories wrecking Britain](#)



19 April 2017

The co-leaders of the Green Party, Caroline Lucas and Jonathan Bartley, have written to the leaders of Labour and the Liberal Democrats urging them to unite to stop the Tories 'wrecking Britain'. [1] Lucas and Bartley are calling for a meeting between party leaders to discuss ways to beat the Tories at the General Election and deliver a fairer voting system.

In their letter to Jeremy Corbyn and Tim Farron, Lucas and Bartley listed a 'crumbling NHS' and a 'bleak future for young people' as reasons for parties to work together. They also said that working together is key to prevent an 'extreme' Brexit inspired by the Tories, UKIP and the DUP.

The call from the Green Party comes after senior figures in Labour – Lisa Nandy, Clive Lewis and Jonathan Reynolds – called on their party to consider standing aside at the Richmond by election last year. [2] In that election the Green Party stood aside, helping the Liberal Democrats defeat UKIP-backed Zac Goldsmith.

The Green Party expects to stand in seats in 'every corner of the UK' in the General Election on June 8th – but are asking Farron and Corbyn to explore options to stand the best chance of beating the Conservatives. At their recent conference the Green Party membership instructed their leaders to explore electoral alliances with other parties to beat the Tories. [3]

Caroline Lucas and Jonathan Bartley will make further announcements in the coming weeks on their plans, but insist that any agreement between parties must be made at a local level by ordinary members who share an interest in defeating the Conservatives.

Caroline Lucas said:

"Britain is at a crossroads – and this election will dictate the very future of our country. The Green Party will be standing on a unique policy platform – opposing the Tories' Brexit and putting forward big ideas for a fairer economy and the protection of our environment. Our call for a meeting between party leaders isn't about the Greens standing aside – it's about giving people in this country the best possible chance of defeating the

Conservatives and bringing in a truly democratic voting system.

“For the sake of our NHS, our welfare state and our environment we need progressive party leaders to ditch partisan politics just for a moment and think about how we can best stop the Tories from wrecking our country for generations to come.”

Notes:

[1] Full letter:

Dear Jeremy and Tim,

We are getting in touch to invite you to meet with us to discuss ways to stop the Tories wrecking our country in the context of the forthcoming general election.

Greens have a powerful and compelling vision for building a better, bolder Britain and, like you, will be using the election to set out our policies and ask for voters' support. However, we also continue to believe there is a role for some form of cooperation in a handful of seats to create the best possible chance of beating the Tories and, crucially, of thereby delivering a fairer voting system. The latter is critical if we want to build the better politics to which both of you have said you are committed. We are deeply concerned too about the prospect of a further Conservative majority and the impact on our crumbling NHS, the housing crisis, the environment and what for young people is a bleak and uncertain future.

We'd like to meet to explore the best options for beating the Tories in June. We understand that, in the immediate run up to an election, signalling a willingness to work with other parties might be difficult but we hope you'll agree that the times we are living in require leaders to be courageous and visionary, to actively build a more positive politics. Britain is at a crossroads – and this election will dictate the very future of our country. Many of the public want us to join forces to help stop the Tories from further wrecking our country for generations to come and we hope you will be willing to at least take the first step and meet with us.

Best wishes, Caroline and Jonathan

[2] Lewis, Nandy and Reynolds call for Labour to stand aside in Richmond:
<http://labourlist.org/2016/10/lewis-nandy-and-reynolds-lets-make-this-a-referendum-on-goldsmith-not-heathrow/>

[3] Green Party Conference backs electoral alliance:

<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2017/04/caroline-lucas-i-think-what-justin-trudeau-did-was-absolutely-outrageous>

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[Green Party responds to John McDonnell on tax](#)



19 April 2017

The Green Party has responded to John McDonnell's refusal to say that the general level of taxation would rise under a Labour Government. Specifically he said that only those earning £70-£80,000 would have to pay more, despite just 15% of people earning over £42,000 and just one in 20 earning £78,000 per year. [1] [2]

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, called for an honest debate about tax to ensure that public services are protected.

He said:

"It's deeply disappointing to hear the Shadow Chancellor back away from a radical shakeup of the tax system to truly redistribute wealth and support our public services. The truth is that that anyone paying higher rate tax is in the top 15% of earners in the country, and we should be asking them to pay more to stop our NHS crumbling and our welfare state being destroyed. Indeed the general level of taxation in the country should be going up. That's why the Green Party will, in the coming weeks, reveal a bold tax plan which would provide Britain with world-leading public services."

Notes:

[1]

<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/economy/2016/11/no-john-mcdonnell-people-earning-over-42000-have-not-been-hit-hard>

[2] <http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/news/article-3621852/More-1m-people-say-earn-100k-year-nearly-50-000-make-1m-survey-finds.html>

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[Green Party: We will make history in Bristol West](#)



18 April 2017

Molly Scott Cato, MEP for the South West, will stand in Bristol West for the Green Party in the early General Election on June 8.

Scott Cato said:

“The Green Party stands to make history in Bristol on June 8, where the people of Bristol West will have the chance to elect their first Green MP. I’ve served the area as MEP since 2014 and as an MP I’ll be 100% committed to protecting the environment and fighting climate change. I represent a party untainted by the unpopular policy of privatisation.

“The Green Party has been calling for a general election since June last year because the Prime Minister has no mandate to throw us off a Brexit cliff edge. We can create another future for Britain. I will resist an extreme Brexit and I’m determined to give the people of Bristol a vote on the final deal. Bristol is the country’s Greenest city and I look forward to making history in June.”

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[Green Party: We're ready for an early General Election](#)



18 April 2017

The Green Party has responded to Theresa May’s announcement of an early General Election.

Caroline Lucas MP has promised a ‘bold, positive vision for a different kind of Britain’ while co-leader Jonathan Bartley said that the Green Party would give people a ‘real alternative to the politics of the past’.

Caroline Lucas said:

“Britain is at a crossroads – and today’s announcement means that people are rightly given a say over the direction this country is going to take. Only the Green Party offers a bold, positive vision for a different kind of Britain. At this election we will stand for an economy that works for everyone, not just the privileged few; a Britain that’s open to the world and the protection of our precious environment. We will stand up to the politics of hatred and division that is scarring our communities and give people across the country a chance to vote for a better Britain.”

Jonathan Bartley said:

“Theresa May’s announcement today reveals a deep dishonesty at the heart of Government. Despite numerous denials of a plan for an early General Election she has u-turned. The Green Party is ready for this seismic moment in our country’s future. We will be standing candidates in every corner of this country and giving people a real alternative to the politics of the past.”

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