

## Green Peers respond to House of Lords appointments

Green Peers Jenny Jones and Natalie Bennett respond to news that new Peers have been appointed to the House of Lords:

“We are the two Green Party peers who have campaigned for the Lords to be replaced with an elected second chamber. We hope these new peers will join us in doing the same.

“If the second chamber matched the votes at the general election, there would be more than fifty greens under a fair votes system. Instead, we have the establishment parties constantly appointing people and increasing the size of the house for their own purposes.”

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## Greens respond to Ofwat price rise green light

Responding to Ofwat’s announcement of planned water bill rises over the next five years, co-leader of the Green Party, Adrian Ramsay, said:

“England has one of the only fully privatised water networks in the world, and we are all paying a high price for this.

“Privatisation has resulted in £80bn being leaked out to shareholders in dividends since 1990 and some water companies paying out more in dividends than they’ve made in profit. This shortfall has been made up through borrowing, leaving companies in serious debt.

“Meanwhile, water companies were responsible for releasing raw sewage for 3.6m hours last year, double the amount recorded the year before.

“Yet despite this record of public failure and private reward, water companies have pressed Ofwat to allow eye-watering rises in water bills so they can give even larger returns to private investors.

“The way to end this model of failure and ensure money is invested in improving the quality of services provided, infrastructure improvements, and protecting our environment is to bring water back into public ownership.”

## **Green reaction to government's financial settlement for councils**

Reacting to the government's financial settlement for local government announced today, Green Party co leader Adrian Ramsay MP said:

"The funding settlement is barely enough to keep councils ticking over. It does very little to ease the underlying financial stresses that local authorities are facing after years of rising costs around social care, special educational needs and reduced government grants.

"The government's planning reforms and stated intentions for local government re-organisation mean stripping local people of a democratic say in how local services are delivered, while this latest funding round deprives councils of the means to deliver quality services for all.

"We need a real change in local government finances that enables councils to use money raised from those with the broadest shoulders to deliver quality services that people need and want."

## **Green Party reaction to government and regulators 'breaking law' over sewage spills**

Reacting to news that government and regulators [have broken the law](#) by being too lenient on water companies that spill sewage, and on the day [Thames Water seeks a £3bn bailout](#), Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay MP said:

"For too long billions have been leaking out to shareholders instead of going into fixing our broken water system. But it will be water customers who are expected to bail out this failed model of privatisation through steep hikes to water bills.

"The way to end this fiasco and ensure government and regulators keep within

the law is to put failing water companies into special administration and ultimately to bring water back into public ownership."

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## Green Party reaction to launch of Devolution White Paper

### 2. [Press Releases](#)

Reacting to the government's [White Paper on the reorganisation of local government](#), Green Party MP Ellie Chowns said:

"There is much to be welcomed in this White Paper including strengthening the rights of communities to purchase cherished local assets such as youth clubs, libraries or sport facilities; increasing powers over control of local transport, better alignment of public services including police, health and probation and removing the need for government to sign off decisions for locally specific things like cycle lanes.

"The big gap is the democratic deficit in Labour's plans. This risks being devolution that steals power away from local people. We have to ask, how will local communities get heard? And who will hold mayors to account?

"We need to keep the local in local government. That means decision making as close as possible to the people most impacted; it involves trusting local communities to know what is best for them and supporting them with investment to deliver real change. And true democracy must include a fair proportional voting system for local elections, which seems to be a glaring omission from this White Paper."

16 December 2024 / 16 December 2024 by [Green Party](#)

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