

Is the Prime Minister brave enough to allow common-sense prison reforms ask Greens

2. Press Releases

Responding to this morning's [NAO report on the crisis in Britain's prisons](#), Green Party MP Siân Berry said,

"The National Audit Office has revealed in stark terms the futility of a society trying to imprison away crime.

"However fast the Government builds prisons, at the current rates of offending and reoffending, the respite from the current crisis of overcrowding will only last a handful of years.

"The Government must face this reality and build not more prisons but a planned programme of prevention and more effective alternatives to incarceration, particularly for women, young people and offenders whose crimes are driven by poverty and destitution.

"We need wholesale reform of short prison sentences, a focus on providing a real new start for people leaving prison, including safe housing, and a clear-headed look at the many ways people can repay their criminal debts to society more constructively."

She continued,

"At the heart of this crisis is a continuous error from successive governments – amplified by misleading front pages – in assuming that the way to reduce crime is to keep locking up more and more of our citizens.

"Reducing crime means investing in services and job opportunities for young people, and I am confident that Justice Minister Lord Timpson knows this.

"The only question is whether the Prime Minister is bold and brave enough to allow him to bring forward common-sense reforms to bring prison populations back down, rather than trying to build their way out of this crisis."

4 December 2024 by [Green Party](#)

[Press Releases](#)

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Caroline Lucas responds to suggestion Labour set to shelve Natural History GCSE

2. Press Releases

Former Green Party MP, Caroline Lucas, has given her reaction to suggestions that plans for a Natural History GCSE have been shelved because it is “seen as a Conservative party initiative.” Caroline was one of the key drivers of the GCSE in the last parliament. She said:

“I very much hope that Labour will look at this again, and appreciate both the popularity of the proposed Natural History GCSE, and the urgency of its introduction. The GCSE enjoys huge support, including from WWF and the Wildlife Trusts through to the Natural History Museum, the Association of School and College Leaders, 17 universities and thousands of young people themselves.

“It was a privilege to work with author and former BBC producer Mary Colwell, who has spearheaded the campaign, to persuade the last Government to agree to it. The curriculum has been prepared over several years by the OCR exam board, and it’s close to being ready to roll out. Stalling at this point would be a disaster, doing a massive disservice to students who desperately want to learn more about the natural world; failing to equip them with the skills of the naturalist which have increasingly been lost, and making it harder for all of us to restore and protect nature.

“Over the last half century, the world has lost 60% of the mass of mammals, birds, fish and reptiles – our education system urgently needs to rise to the challenge of reversing this shocking scale of loss.”

3 December 2024 / 3 December 2024 by [Green Party](#)

[Press Releases](#)

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Green Party response to “unrealistic” housing targets

2. Press Releases

Responding to news that local councils have told the government that [its plan to build 1.5m new homes in England over the next five years is “unrealistic”](#), Green MP Ellie Chowns said:

“Labour’s housing strategy involves cosying up to big wealthy developers and falling for the myth that the private sector will build the housing that we need. But too many developers are more interested in lining their own pockets than in providing what communities are actually crying out for, which is affordable housing.

“We can’t privatise our way out of the housing crisis. If we are to build the right homes in the right place and at the right price, we need to build hundreds of thousands of new council and social homes. These need to be in places well served by schools, health services and public transport. Not detached housing estates with a predominance of large expensive homes that make a quick and big buck for developers but are out of reach for most people.”

2 December 2024 / 2 December 2024 by [Green Party](#)

[Press Releases](#)

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Greens respond to parliamentary vote on assisted dying Bill

2. [Press Releases](#)

Green MP Sian Berry said:

“Today’s decisive vote in Parliament represents how the public feels about this highly sensitive issue.

“The debate was full of caring and compassion on both sides – with all MPs listening respectfully to one another.

“Each Green MP came to their decision after listening closely to the debate without being whipped.

“We are now ready to work cross-party for a final Bill that has had every line closely examined and which will relieve the suffering of people who are dying whilst improving the options available for all of us at the end of our lives.”

Green Party responds to conclusion of COP29

Reacting to the conclusion of COP29, Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay MP said:

“This COP has tested the patience of everyone who wants to see the devastating climate crisis tackled.

“The final agreement is simply not good enough for the world’s poorest nations with too little money to deal with devastating impact of climate change, and the oil and gas lobby has succeeded in weakening the commitment made at the last COP to ‘transition away’ from fossil fuels.

“Yet, COP is still the one international forum in which those who are today bearing the major, immediate burdens of the human-made climate catastrophe become visible and heard.

“It is the one forum that offers the chance to bring nations together to act and move away from the fossil fuel economies that are destroying our planet and making life intolerable for millions in the global South.

“That is worth protecting and building on.

“We are half-way through a critical decade for action, and the devastation wrought through more floods, drought and wildfires is now obvious.

“The moral and scientific case for doing everything possible to meet the demands of the Paris climate agreement becomes stronger as the damage caused by every 0.1 degree rise becomes ever clearer.

“Now is the time for action. That means turning the limited financial pledges agreed at COP, which already fall far below the demands of the global South, into hard cash.

“That money – in the form of grants, not loans – needs to be available right now for adaptation and mitigation, alongside funding to cover the loss and damage already experienced by the poorest countries.

“The climate finance to fund the transition to a global green economy only makes sense if we move away from fossil fuels. Here, that means the Labour

government ruling out the Rosebank development in the North Sea.

"Prime Minister Keir Starmer has shown commitment to the COP process by being one of the few leaders of richer countries to attend.

"Now, he needs to build on that foundation and take an international lead in defending the gains made through previous COPs in the face of what will be a relentless attack by fossil fuel companies backed by a climate denier in the White House from January next year.

"He must also take seriously the need to make the UK more resilient to changes in the climate that are already affecting us here.

"Climate action today is about creating a world tomorrow in which can meet people's basic needs and enable people and nature to thrive.

"The UK government should back the call from international leaders (1) for a reformed COP process in which the powerful fossil fuel lobby is excluded.

"The fossil fuel lobby has the self-interest to block the immediate action the people and planet need. They cannot be allowed to succeed.

"COP must become the forum that holds governments to account and pushes forward change, including supporting countries to adapt to the impacts of the crisis already being felt.

"A COP that excludes the fossil fuel companies and their lobbying arms while supporting representatives of countries and indigenous peoples most impacted by climate change can transform all our futures."

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. <https://www.cluboffrome.org/cop-reform-2024/>

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