

Back small businesses to make the most of a fairer, greener economy



2 December 2023

The Green Party of England and Wales is calling on government to offer a Small Business Saturday support package to help firms thrive in their green transition.

Co-leader Carla Denyer said:

"I visit independent businesses and social enterprises up and down the country, and so many say that they want to make a success of greening their operations.

"But they need government to get behind them and offer the right support.

"Analysis by the British Business Bank found that small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) account for almost one third of all UK carbon emissions and around half of total UK business emissions, but the Net Zero Review highlighted the challenges SMEs face in making the change to meet net zero.

"We need a competitively fair transition to net zero that benefits rather than hinders the small and independent businesses that bring so much benefit to our local communities.

"That's why, this Small Business Saturday, we are calling for government to act and help small businesses thrive in their green transition.

"The Green Party's alternative Autumn Statement identified £30 billion that could be raised by making the super-rich pay a little more tax [1]. Just £3 billion of that could be used to double funding for Green Transition Grants – to help small businesses prepare for and make the most of the opportunities of greening the economy.

"From assisting small businesses to decarbonise their transport needs, to reforming VAT and suspending Covid repayments, there is much more the government should be doing.

"Small and independent businesses and enterprises are the heart of local communities. The Green Party has long been the party of small business, and we want to see them thrive."

This Small Business Saturday the Green Party are calling for:

1. An additional £3 billion in Green Transition Grants for small businesses to help them prepare for and take advantage of the opportunities offered by greening the economy [2].

2. Assistance for small businesses to decarbonise their transport needs. Independent traders and tradespeople need access to electric vans and other low carbon transport solutions on the same terms as large companies. [3]
3. Support for small businesses to improve employee wellbeing. Measures should include exempting all childcare providers in England from business rates.
4. Reform of VAT to support small businesses and suspension of Covid repayments. The government must reform our VAT system so that it differentially supports smaller shops and businesses compared to larger and online businesses. Likewise, there should be an immediate suspension of Covid loan repayments to provide much needed relief for businesses.

NOTES

[1] Full details of the Green Party's alternative Autumn Statement available here:

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2023/11/21/autumn-statement-greens-offer-10-point-plan-of-distinctive-tax-and-spend-policies-to-create-a-fairer,-greener-country/>

[2] This would include investing an additional £3 billion in Green Transition Grants for small businesses to help them prepare for and take advantage of the opportunities offered by greening the economy. Analysis by the British Business Bank found that SMEs account for almost one third of all UK emissions and around half of total UK business emissions. The Government is currently providing very little financial support for small business in the transition to Net Zero. Despite Chris Skidmore's Net Zero Review highlighting the challenges faced by SMEs, small sums from the UK's Shared Prosperity Fund have been channelled via local authorities. We need a competitively fair transition to Net Zero that benefits rather than hinders SMEs.

[3] SMEs face greater barriers to decarbonising their transport than do large businesses. For instance, they are impacted by market shortages of second-hand, low emissions vehicles which has meant larger businesses have been able to obtain suitable vehicles while smaller businesses have not. Greens want to see government offering information, advice and market interventions such as grants so that SMEs are able to obtain suitable vehicles and have the right incentives to overcome these and other barriers.

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Keeping 1.5 alive, phasing out fossil fuels and tackling climate inequality must be priorities for COP28 climate talks



29 November 2023

As the COP28 climate talks begin today in Dubai, the Green Party has set out three key demands. They are to 'keep 1.5 alive'; an agreement on the fair and managed phase-out of all fossil fuels; and measures to address 'climate inequality.' Greens are challenging the UK government to lead by example and put into practice policies that will help meet these demands.

Co-leader of the Green Party, Carla Denyer, said:

"We need to hear a clear unambiguous commitment from the UK government to the 1.5C Paris Agreement target which was signed up to by 196 countries eight years ago at COP21. The government must agree to whatever climate action is needed to get this target back on track. It's going to require a hugely ambitious strategy, but the massive scaling up of climate action that is now necessary is because of dither and delay by countries like the UK in taking the bold action needed.

"Another vital outcome of COP28 must be the fair and managed phase-out of all fossil fuels. As one of the rich countries most responsible for the climate crisis, the UK must stand on the side of future generations and those on the front line of climate breakdown and agree to urgently move away from fossil fuels. The UK government must resist pressure from the petrostates and others at COP who wish to continue with business as usual and keep the world hooked on fossil fuels. At home this means leading by example with an immediate end to all new oil and gas licences and a rapid acceleration towards renewable energy.

"Thirdly, these climate talks must recognise that it is a super-rich elite who are super-heating the planet. The UK government must be willing to challenge the grotesque inequality driving climate breakdown and reform our tax system to make the polluter pay. This means taxing the wealth of the super-rich and introducing a carbon tax on the most polluting corporations and individuals. Such taxes, introduced globally, could generate the funds needed for a generous new Loss and Damage Fund to finance climate action in the poorest countries – those suffering the most from the impacts of climate breakdown but contributing the least to the crisis."

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[Greens respond to Labour Warm Homes Plan](#)



29 November 2023

Responding to Labour's Warm Homes Plan, Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

"I fear this is more warm words than warm homes.

"Labour has made it clear that it plans to follow the Conservative party's tight fiscal policies, and without real investment from government, delivered through councils to support local communities, this plan will fall short of what we need.

"Every home should be properly insulated and free from damp and mould. We are calling for £145 billion over ten years to be invested to make that happen.

"That is the scale of the challenge and opportunity that Labour needs to grasp."

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[Green Party calls for ban on private jets, "the ultimate symbol of 'climate inequality'"](#)



28 November 2023

The Green Party has called for a ban on all private jets taking off or landing at UK airports. They say this form of transportation, favoured by a super-rich elite, is the ultimate symbol of 'climate inequality' where the richest 1% of the population produce as much planet warming pollution each year as 5 billion people making up the poorest two-thirds of the global population [1].

Co-leader of the Green Party, Carla Denyer, said:

“As the COP28 climate conference gets under way this week, governments can no longer ignore the very large elephant in the room – that it is a super-rich elite who are super-heating the planet.

“Private jets are the favoured form of transport by this super-rich elite and are the ultimate symbol of the ‘climate inequality’ that is not only leading to the breakdown of our climate but is also deeply unfair. A short trip on a private jet will produce more carbon than the average person emits all year.

“The Green Party wants the UK government to challenge the grotesque inequality driving climate breakdown. By pledging to impose a ban on all private jets taking off or landing at UK airports, the government would send a clear message to global leaders at COP28 that the super-rich cannot be allowed to continue with their lavish and destructive lifestyles at the expense of the rest of the global population.

“The Green Party also wants to see the introduction of a carbon tax [2] which would target the biggest polluters, and a wealth tax on the super-rich [3]. Oxfam has calculated that taxing the world’s richest 1% fairly would cut carbon emissions equivalent to more than the total emissions of the UK.

“While the richest can use their vast wealth to cocoon themselves, the poorest have nowhere to hide from the impacts of climate chaos. COP28 needs to ensure those with the greatest responsibility for the climate crisis end their destructive ways. And we must redistribute the price paid by the heaviest polluters towards helping those on the front line of climate breakdown and to hasten the transition to a fairer, greener world.”

1. [Climate equality report Oxfam executive summary pdf](#)
2. [Greens call on government to bring in carbon tax at COP26 | The Green Party](#)
3. [Tax the richest 1% to pay for better, warmer homes, say Greens | The Green Party](#)

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Greens call for president of COP to go following oil and gas deal revelations



27 November 2023

Following revelations that the president of COP28, Dr Sultan al-Jaber – who is also CEO of the United Arab Emirates state oil company – was planning to be part of a UAE delegation seeking to use the climate talks as an opportunity to strike oil and gas deals with other countries [1], co leader of the Green Party Adrian Ramsay said:

“It was always highly dubious appointing the CEO of a giant state oil company to be COP president. Dr Sultan al-Jaber has now been caught red handed trying to stitch up oil and gas deals when he should be trying to persuade countries to move away from fossil fuels. He is totally inappropriate and has demonstrated himself to be completely compromised. The Green Party calls on him to go and we expect the UK government to do the same – it’s a fair cop.”

“One of the main reasons why the world is failing to deal with the climate crisis is because politicians in the UK and across the world are in the pockets of the oil and gas industry. Or in the case of Sultan al-Jaber, they are the oil and gas industry.

“We need a new generation of political leaders who will end our dependence on fossil fuels and create a home grown, renewable energy transformation with all the benefits that will bring for lower bills, new jobs and a safe environment. And the UN now needs to quickly appoint someone as president of COP who has a clear track record on a commitment to climate action.”

Notes

1. [COP28: UAE planned to use climate talks to make oil deals – BBC News](#)

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