

Caroline Lucas: Diesel ban 'doesn't go nearly far enough'



26 July 2017

Caroline Lucas, co-leader of the Green Party, has hailed a 'step forward' on air pollution as the Government announce a ban on diesel from 2040, but said their plan 'doesn't go nearly far enough'.

Lucas is calling for ministers to invest in public transport, expand clean air zones and fund a diesel scrappage scheme.

Caroline Lucas said:

"This is a step forward from the Government – and follows years of campaigning on the issue from the Green Party and others. We know that the fumes from cars and lorries are ending thousands of lives prematurely each year, and it's good to see the Government making this move which will protect people's health and boost a key industry of the future. Though a ban by 2040 is a welcome, it doesn't go nearly far enough or fast enough. We also need action that tackles this health emergency in the coming months and years. Such action must include expanded clean air zones and a fully funded diesel scrappage scheme.

"It's crucial that scrapping diesel doesn't simply shift people into other types of car – instead we should use this opportunity to revamp our towns and cities with investment in walking and cycling, and by ensuring that public transport is affordable and reliable."

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Caroline Lucas responds to Government battery announcement



24 July 2017

Caroline Lucas, the co-leader of the Green Party, has responded to the Government's announcement on battery storage.

Business secretary Greg Clark unveiled a £246 million investment in battery technology, and promised a more flexible grid for the future.

Caroline Lucas said:

"Today's announcement from the Government is a positive step forward, but highlights the deep inconsistencies in their approach to the environment and the creation of an economy for the future. With green job creation stalling, and fewer jobs in the sector being created this year than any year since 2012, it's good to see investment in battery technology finally coming through. However the fact is that such actions could be rendered meaningless if the Government continues to subsidise fossil fuels, promote fracking and divert resources towards costly nuclear. Indeed this investment in battery technology really is a drop in the ocean when compared to the eye-watering cost of new nuclear, or the yearly handouts given to fossil fuels firms.

"With a fifth of jobs in solar having been lost in recent years, and an effective ban on onshore wind – it's clear that the Conservatives have a long way to go in proving their environmental credentials. In the last few days we've seen the Government display some signs of a shift of attitude towards climate change and protecting our environment – that is welcome. It's now down to ministers to show that they have the resolve to swiftly shift our economy's gear, and ensure it's fit for the future."

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[Green Party calls for new trans rights as government announces review of Gender Recognition Act](#)



23 July 2017

The Green Party has responded to the Government Equalities Office's announcement of a review of the Gender Recognition Act [1].

Aimee Challenor, Green Party LGBTIQ+ spokesperson, said:

"The Green Party has long maintained the Gender Recognition Act discriminates against some trans people and a review is well overdue. This is a welcome move from the GEO when LGBTIQ+ rights are under unprecedented threat around the world, but we need to make sure the review brings to light the significant flaws in the act and leads to real change.

"We need an overhaul of trans rights in the act in order for it to be fit for purpose. In particular, trans youth and non-binary people need to be able to obtain legal gender recognition. It's also crucial we remove the medicalisation of the process."

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40692782>

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[Green MEP welcomes Gove pledge on 'Green Brexit' but says Environment Secretary still in 'special measures'](#)



21 July 2017

Molly Scott Cato, Green MEP for the South West, who sits on the European Parliament's Agriculture Committee, has welcomed Michael Gove's pledge to deliver a "Green Brexit" [1]. Dr Scott Cato said:

"It's a moment to celebrate the extraordinary: Greens agree with Michael Gove. I'm left wondering if he has been reading the reports I commissioned on how we can create a more sustainable farming system [2]. However, it doesn't take a farmer to tell you that word's butter no parsnips and we will need to keep the new Environment Secretary in special measures until he delivers on his promises."

Speaking this morning on BBC Radio 4 Today [3], Molly Scott Cato said:

"As long as we make sure that he doesn't consider grouse moors and other things his wealthy friends do with their land to be of environmental benefit, I think we can be in agreement."

She went on to argue that the most pressing environmental priority was tackling climate change. She said:

"In order to stay within the 2-degree safety limit we have to recapture a lot of the carbon that is already in the atmosphere which is very much about how we use our land. We should be rewarding the type of farming that captures and stores carbon such as restoring wetlands, greater use of agri-forestry and

tree planting.”

Dr Scott Cato concluded:

“Where Michael Gove and I part company is over our membership of the EU. I continue to believe that the best place for UK farmers and food producers is inside the EU, and in particular inside the single market; around 65% of total UK agricultural exports go to the EU. None-the-less, I am pleased to see one of the key architects of Brexit pledging that in future he wants subsidies paid on the basis of social and environmental benefits rather than just going to rich landowners. This is a policy long championed by Greens across Europe.”

Notes

[1]

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/michael-gove-green-brexit-environment-secretary-climate-change-theresa-may-cabinet-conservative-a7851466.html>

[2] <http://mollymep.org.uk/2017/02/20/agri-reports/>

[3] Interview can be heard on Molly’s SoundCloud:

<https://soundcloud.com/molly-scott-cato/response-to-michael-goves-plans-for-greenbrexit>

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[Green Party responds to inflation figures](#)



18 July 2017

The Green Party has responded to news that inflation dropped from 2.9% in May to 2.6% in June [1], saying that despite the good news prices are still rising faster than wages.

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

“Despite a slight drop in inflation workers are still seeing their pay squeezed, as prices continue to rise faster than wages. The Government will try and paint today’s figures as good news – but the truth is that the Tories are presiding over an economy in which working people struggle to feed their families. Communities never recovered from the bankers’ crisis in 2008 and now they’re faced with the economic calamity of a Tory brexit.

“It’s abundantly clear that Britain needs an urgent pay rise, to stop more families falling into poverty. Public sector pay caps must be scrapped and the minimum wage should be raised without delay. The cruel benefits squeeze must also be abandoned, to stop Britain’s poorest people falling into destitution. The Tory high command are stuck like a rabbit in the Brexit headlights – unable to take the action needed to stop our economy and living standards falling off a cliff.”

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-40642254>

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