

Caroline Lucas: 'Environment-shaped hole' in Repeal Bill



13 July 2017

Caroline Lucas, the co-leader of the Green Party, has said that there is an 'environment-shaped hole' in the Repeal Bill which the Government published today [1].

Lucas is specifically concerned that the bill lacks provision for enforcing environmental laws.

She said:

"There's an enormous environment-shaped hole in the Government's Brexit plans. The Repeal Bill may transfer EU laws onto the British statute, but there's no provision here for ensuring that these laws are properly enforced by institutions in the UK. The Government knows that this simple transfer isn't enough to ensure that our environment is protected – and their refusal to legislate for specific environmental protections and enforcement is reckless.

"I'll be working with fellow MPs to table amendments to the Repeal Bill, specifically in order to force the Government to ensure that environmental laws are properly enforced as we go through the Brexit process."

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-40589510>

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Greens accuse government of 'unacceptable dithering' on Swansea tidal lagoon



12 July 2017

***Funding put on hold after government fails to approve project**

***Greens demand a date for final decision**

***Green Party leaders: "This dithering has resulted in uncertainty over investment, putting this valuable project in jeopardy"**

The Green Party has written to the Government to demand action on the Swansea tidal lagoon, which has not been approved despite a report calling for the project to go ahead.

The lagoon's investors have put further funding on hold [1] as the government is yet to approve or even respond to the review by former minister Charles Hendry, which was published over six months ago [2].

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party of England and Wales, and Grenville Ham, leader of the Green Party of Wales, have written to Greg Clark MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to raise concerns over the delay and demand a date the government will respond to the Hendry review and make a final decision.

In the letter, they said:

"The Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project would be an integral part of the energy revolution this country needs. The independent Hendry review commissioned by the UK government gave a glowing endorsement of the project, highlighting that the energy provided would be less expensive than offshore wind and

significantly less expensive than nuclear.

“The report – which unambiguously called for strong government backing of this project – was published over six months ago. Yet, not only has the government failed to act on its clear recommendations, it has not even published a response. This dithering has resulted in uncertainty over investment, putting this valuable project in jeopardy.”

Notes:

1. <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/local-news/money-drying-up-swanseal-tidal-13306328>
2. <https://wales.greenparty.org.uk/news/2017/01/12/wales-green-party-welcomes-positive-findings-of-hendry-review-on-swanseal-lagoon/>
3. Full text of the letter:

Dear Rt. Hon Greg Clark MP

We have been extremely concerned by this week's reports that investors might withdraw from the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project if it is not shortly approved by Government.

As Green Party leaders, we strongly support the transition to renewable power across the UK. Therefore, we are writing to urge you to give investors the clarity that they need.

The Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project would be an integral part of the energy revolution this country needs. The independent Hendry review commissioned by the UK government gave a glowing endorsement of the project, highlighting that the energy provided would be less expensive than offshore wind and significantly less expensive than nuclear.

Beyond the lower costs of energy, the project would also create thousands of jobs, it would help to kick-start a new industry, and it would make a valuable contribution to our decarbonisation targets. In contrast to Hinkley, the tidal lagoon would also be on grid sooner, would be in operation for longer, and would carry significantly less environmental risk.

The report – which unambiguously called for strong government backing of this project – was published over six months ago. Yet, not only has the government failed to act on its clear recommendations, it has not even published a response. This dithering has resulted in uncertainty over investment, putting this valuable project in jeopardy.

Please will you now provide a firm date for your department's formal response to the Hendry review and your decision on whether to support the project? In doing so, we hope that you will accept the findings of the Hendry review and accept the wishes of the Welsh Government by approving this project.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Bartley

Co-leader of the Green Party of England and Wales

Grenville Ham

Leader of the Green Party of Wales

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Unemployment figures are a “convenient camouflage” says Green Co-Leader



12 July 2017

Responding to today's release of labour market statistics from the Office for National Statistics [1], Co-Leader of the Green Party Jonathan Bartley said:

“The government must not use headline unemployment figures as a convenient camouflage to hide the fact that our economy is fundamentally failing.

“Today's figures show that both actual hours worked and average weekly earnings fell in real terms. The economy is not meeting the needs of the very people it should be serving.

“More and more workers are being trapped in precarious informal employment or part-time work.

“Yesterday's Taylor report did not propose the bold ideas we need. We need to go back to basics and ask who the economy is really for.

“What good are low unemployment figures if your income isn't enough to build

a life upon? What good is it being forced to take up a job that gives you no security, no stability, and no sense of satisfaction?

“We need to make the economy work for everyone. That means a decent living wage, ensuring everyone is paid a basic income, providing a footing from which to pursue a career that is rewarding and inspiring. It means transitioning and rebalancing our hollowed out economy to invest in the jobs we need for a resilient and secure future, such as in the renewables sector. And it means exploring ideas such as a four-day working week.”

Notes

[1] <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/latest>

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[Green Party responds to Taylor review](#)



11 July 2017

The Green Party has responded to the Prime Minister's speech on Matthew Taylor's Review of Modern Working Practices [1].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“Theresa May says she wants bold ideas but her response is weak. The Prime Minister looks set to under deliver on a review into the gig economy that does not go far enough to empower or protect workers.

“It is inadequate to tinker with the edges of a system that is already

broken. Introducing a presumption of employment, with the burden falling on the employer to prove otherwise is a step in the right direction – but it's disappointing to see no moves to get rid of extortionate tribunal fees which stop workers who have been exploited from accessing justice. Proposals for tax and National Insurance reform, meanwhile, lack teeth. Greater 'consistency' between employment and self-employment will only happen in the long term and provide no guarantee of equality.

"Despite talk of addressing insecurity and the impact automation, and aspirations to change the debate about what good work looks like, there is no mention in the report of a shorter working week or a Basic Income. If the Prime Minister is serious about overhauling the world of work to keep up with the demands of the 21st Century she will consider Green calls for a shorter working week, a move which would improve people's quality of life and see productivity rise at the same time. A universal payment to all people in the form of a Basic Income would reward unpaid work, enable people to pursue fulfilling employment, increase people's options and act as a safety net for everyone.

"In her speech the Prime Minister flagged the Brexit vote as an indication that people wanted more control. The question by which this review and the actions of the Prime Minister should be measured is 'will the balance of power in the workplace fundamentally shift?' The resounding answer is 'no'."

1.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/626772/good-work-taylor-review-modern-working-practices.pdf

Green Party press release

For immediate release – 11 July 2017

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"It is inadequate to tinker with the edges of a system that is already broken. Introducing a presumption of employment, with the burden falling on the employer to prove otherwise is a step in the right direction – but it's disappointing to see no moves to get rid of extortionate tribunal fees which stop workers who have been exploited from accessing justice. Proposals for tax and National Insurance reform, meanwhile, lack teeth. Greater 'consistency' between employment and self-employment will only happen in the long term and provide no guarantee of equality.

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ENDS.

For more information contact: press@greenparty.org.uk / 0203 691 9401

Notes:

1. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/626772/good-work-taylor-review-modern-working-practices.pdf

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[Green Party responds to news teachers' pay will remain capped at 1% annual increase](#)



10 July 2017

Responding to the news that the annual increase in teachers' pay in England and Wales will remain capped at 1% [1], the Green Party's Spokesperson for Education Vix Lowthion said:

"The Government's pay review is another betrayal of teachers. Not only is a low pay award set to hinder new entrants to the profession, but it will increase the damage from the teacher retention crisis. Those of us on the front lines of teaching are seeing colleagues leave the profession in droves. Teachers are struggling to make ends meet and juggle the growing pressures of working in schools which are being stripped of the money they need. The government must stop taking teachers for granted, and give them the proper pay rise they deserve.

Notes

[1] <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-40557378>

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