

Natalie Bennett to join fracking protest at Kirby Misperton



17 November 2017

Former Green Party leader Natalie Bennett is returning early from the United Nations COP23 climate talks in Bonn on Friday to support the Kirby Misperton protection camp as the struggle against fracking in Yorkshire continues.

She'll be supporting others taking part in what has become known as 'Green Friday' at the site, after last week Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley was dragged away [1] by police while making a speech to the protectors.

Bennett said:

"The isolation of the English position when it came to fossil fuels was glaringly obvious at the Bonn summit. France, Germany, Bulgaria, and of course Wales and Scotland, have all blocked fracking, but the British pavilion at COP was actually advertising the related extreme energy underground coal gasification.

"It is being left to the people of Yorkshire, and Lancashire, where I earlier this month visited the Preston New Road Protection Camp, to deliver the will of the English people not to have fracking. Opinion polls clearly show that they don't want it, and I know from my past visits to fracking sites just how many passing drivers indicate their support.

"The desperation of the industry to resist the will of the people has been demonstrated by the extreme injunction taken out by the firm Ineos that's now subject to legal appeal. I recently joined a huge gathering in Woodsetts, Rotherham, where the community demonstrated its determination to resist fracking and protect democracy and the right to peaceful protest.

"The Green Party will continue to actively support communities around England who are peacefully rejecting fracking. This is an industry that threatens all of our safety and needs to be stopped."

Notes:

1. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/green-party-joint-leader-jonathan-bartley-dragged-along-road-by-police-at-yorkshire-fracking-protest-a3688386.html>

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Green Party: Report “lays bare the cruelty of Universal Credit”



16 November 2017

The Green Party says a new report [1] by the Women’s Budget Group and the Runnymede Trust, which shows that women and ethnic minorities will lose out financially under Universal Credit, lays bare the cruelty of the system being imposed by the Government.

The Green Party believes that instead of Universal Credit the Government should be looking at creating a Universal Basic Income.

The analysis was published today and exposes the devastating impact of changes such as the cut to the work allowance and the two-child limit.

Women will face the worst of the cuts, with 2.2 million claimants in employment expected to lose an average of £1,400 a year and 3.6 million claimants not in employment set to lose an average £600 a year. Black employed women will lose the most, an average of £1500 a year.

Amelia Womack, Green Party deputy leader, said:

“Universal Credit is nothing more than an attack on Britain’s poorest and most vulnerable and this report lays bare the cruelty of the system. Women are being punished simply for being women, with BME women suffering the most. There is nothing either universal or credit-worthy about Universal Credit.

“The Green Party is calling for the Government to scrap Universal Credit and invest in a Universal Basic Income trial instead, which would make much more of a difference to families living in poverty.”

Notes:

1. <https://wbg.org.uk/news/new-research-shows-universal-credit-failing-just-managing-women-bme-households-hardest-hit/>

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Greens demand shorter waiting times for trans patients



14 November 2017

Green Party politicians have written to Jeremy Hunt to demand action over long wait times for patients who need to access a gender identity clinic.

All NHS gender identity clinics in the UK except one are failing to meet the 18-week referral target [1].

The letter, signed by LGBTIQ+ spokesperson Aimee Challenor and co-leaders Jonathan Bartley and Caroline Lucas, asks Jeremy Hunt to explain what the Department of Health is doing to reduce waiting times and when it expects to meet the target.

The Green Party is highlighting the delays as part of Transgender Awareness Week [2] which runs from November 13 to 17.

Bartley and Challenor will visit the Department of Health at 3.30pm today (November 14) to hand in the letter.

Challenor said:

“The extensive wait times for gender identity clinics have a devastating impact on trans people, who are already at much higher risk of mental health issues and self-harm.

“Nearly every single clinic is failing to meet the target, a year after it was introduced. One clinic has an average waiting time of 130 weeks, an enormous 112 weeks longer than the maximum referral time of 18 weeks.

“It’s unclear what the Department of Health is doing to reduce these delays and that’s why we’re here today – to demand answers from Jeremy Hunt and ensure he takes trans people’s needs seriously.”

Notes:

1. <https://www.gaystarnews.com/article/nhs-fails-trans-people-gender-identity-clinics/>
2. <https://www.glaad.org/transweek>
3. Full text of the letter:

Dear Jeremy,

We write to you regarding the extraordinarily long waits faced by patients who need to see a clinician at one of the UK’s Gender Identity Clinics (GIC).

Last December, it was confirmed that the waiting lists for GICs are subject to the NHS-wide 18 week referral target. A year on, all GICs in the UK except for one are failing to meet that target, with some patients having to wait two and a half years before getting an appointment at a GIC.

Going through the process of transitioning within the NHS should empower rather than demean trans people – yet that's not the case. Referral delays are having devastating effects on trans people. Rates of self-harm and suicide attempts are significantly higher for trans people, especially those not receiving treatment. In September 2015, Dr John Dean, Chair of the NHS National Clinical Reference Group for Gender Identity Services told the House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee that “not treating people is not a neutral act – it will do harm”. Trans people are far more likely to have contact with the mental health system, and are at much higher risk of mental health issues, self-harm and suicidal ideation, than cisgender and heterosexual people.

We would like to know what the Department of Health is doing to actively reduce waiting times and when it expects to meet the 18 week referral target.

Yours sincerely,

Aimee Challenor, Green Party LGBTIQ+ spokesperson

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader

Caroline Lucas, Green Party co-leader

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[Green Party submits complaint over Sun's drag queen coverage](#)



13 November 2017

Aimee Challenor, Green Party LGBTIQ+ spokesperson, has filed a complaint with press regulator IPSO over today's coverage in the *Sun* of gender fluidity lessons for toddlers [1].

She has accused the *Sun* of breaching the Editors' Code of Practice by discriminating against trans people.

The *Sun*'s story follows a number of articles targeting the trans community in the *Times* on Saturday (November 11) [2].

Challenor said:

"The *Sun*'s coverage of gender fluidity classes is a sad mix of scaremongering, discrimination and inappropriate jokes about drag queens. On the same day the Church of England issues guidelines to help prevent transphobic bullying, it's appalling that one of our national newspapers is perpetrating such harassment. The rates of suicide and self-harm for young trans people are staggeringly high and it's simply immoral for the *Sun* to feed into the prejudice towards them. We should instead be welcoming the move to improve understanding and inclusivity by talking to children about gender fluidity from an early age."

Notes:

1. <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/4896260/drag-queens-nursery-schools-teach-kids-transgender-issues>

2. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/comment/children-sacrificed-to-appease-trans-lobby-bq0m2mm95>

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/scout-chiefs-accused-over-transgender-self-harming-with-support-for-chest-binding-23f33sgjk>

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/meet-alex-bertie-the-transgender-poster-boy-z88hgh8b8>

3. Full text of the complaint:

I wish to make a complaint under the Editors' Code of Practice relating to the *Sun*'s coverage on November 13, 2017.

I believe the *Sun* has breached clause 12 by publishing prejudicial and pejorative coverage of 'trans lessons' for children.

The paper's front page headline 'The skirt on the drag queen goes swish swish swish: Trans classes for kids aged 2' pokes fun at the issue and ignores the very serious reasons why talking about gender fluidity from an early age are so crucial.

The article itself treats drag queens and the concept of gender fluidity lessons with contempt. The coverage is not only sensationalised but blatant scaremongering about the influence drag queens will have on toddlers.

We live in a society where eight out of 10 trans young people have self-harmed and almost half have attempted to kill themselves. When our national newspapers publish attacks on the LGBTIQ+ community they are fostering a wider climate of hostility, fear and aggression towards us.

For this story to be published on the same day as the Church of England publishes guidelines to prevent transphobic bullying – which the *Sun* has also

reported on and is well aware of – shows just how necessary these steps to prevent bullying are.

Please will you consider if this coverage has breached the code and if so, take action against the Sun to ensure this does not happen again.

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[Greens on latest government revelations: Patel position now “doubly untenable” and May has questions to answer](#)



8 November 2017

The Green Party has said that Priti Patel's position is now “doubly untenable” after it emerged the International Development Secretary failed to disclose all the details of her recent secret meetings in the Middle East to the Prime Minister on Monday [1].

The party says that Ms Patel has broken four out of ten principles of ministerial conduct in the government's own ministerial code.

Co-Leader of the Green Party Jonathan Bartley also said that Theresa May now needs “clean up the mess”, clearly establish the details of what Patel has done and be honest with the British public about what was discussed during her trip to Israel, the promises that were made, and where Government policy now stands in relation to Israel.

Mr Bartley said:

“The latest revelations make Ms Patel's position doubly untenable. Not only has she in effect tried to set up her own secret Middle Eastern policy unit. Not only did she appear to promise money to Israel that wasn't hers to promise. She failed to return to Parliament to take account of her actions, she mislead the prime minister about the details of her visit, and she still hasn't come clean about the full details of her meetings in Israel. To my mind that's at least four out of the ten points in the Ministerial Code broken.

“There can only be one end to this saga: Ms Patel needs to be sacked. But the prime minister also has to clean up the mess. These were the actions of a minister that she appointed. We need full disclosure of the issues discussed, opinions raised, and actions promised in Ms Patel’s meetings in Israel and how the British government intends to respond to those promises. We need to know as well what she will be doing to prevent this kind of event occurring in future and what prevented Ms Patel’s holiday meetings being disclosed to the Cabinet.”

Notes

[1] <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-41904459>

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