

Jean Lambert: Dunkirk is burning, it's time to throw refugee children a lifeline



13 April 2017

On Monday night, a fire ripped through Dunkirk refugee camp in northern France destroying 80% of the site including wooden shelters, community spaces, kitchens and the women's and children's centre [1].

The camp was home to approximately 1,500 people, including more than 100 unaccompanied children. According to legal organisation Safe Passage, there were 80 children living in the camp who have the legal right to be reunited with family members in the UK. Their names have been sent to the Home Office [2].

Jean Lambert, Green MEP for London and Green Party migration spokesperson, said:

"The situation in Dunkirk is desperately sad. As a result of Monday's fire, more than 100 unaccompanied minors now find themselves homeless once again, facing the very real risk of violence and exploitation from people smugglers or of going missing among the chaos.

Legal mechanisms exist to help these young people. All 80 unaccompanied minors who have family members in the UK could be reunited with them immediately under the Dublin Regulation. More lone children who are particularly vulnerable should also be eligible for protection in the UK under the 'Dubs' scheme, which the government scrapped earlier this year after claiming there was no space for them.

I want the Home Office to know that there's space in my constituency, London, where local authorities' offers to take in so-called 'Dubs' children have been cruelly rejected. Many other cities including Birmingham, Bristol and Glasgow are also ready and waiting to welcome more child refugees.

Theresa May's hard-line government has so far showed a total lack of compassion for unaccompanied children in Europe, choosing to invest in fencing and barbed wire rather than in their safety and security. Now that Dunkirk is burning, it's time to throw them a lifeline. I am calling for the Home Office to step up, and fulfill its moral and legal obligations."

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-39562742>
2. http://www.citizensuk.org/need_for_urgent_transfer_of_80_children_from_fire_damaged_refugee_camp

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[Green Party calls on Defra to publish 25-year plan for nature](#)



11 April 2017

The Green Party has responded to news that the BBC has seen a leaked copy of Defra's long-anticipated 25-year plan for nature. [1]

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

"With every day that passes, the need for a new Environmental Protection Act grows. We are in the middle of an air pollution emergency, 2016 was the hottest year on record. Species across the world are in decline, and valuable European environmental protections are threatened by Brexit.

"The need for a coherent plan for nature has never been greater and Defra should publish its 25-year plan immediately so the Government enters Brexit negotiations clear on what needs to be done to protect our environment.

"This is not a time for platitudes or shying away from what needs to happen. We need bold action not empty words. Defra's report should be proposing how we can keep fossil fuels in the ground, make the UK a world leader in renewable energy, ditch diesel and give farmers the real support and help they need to look after their environment." [2]

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-39557565>

2. More information about Caroline Lucas' call for a new Environmental Protection

Act: <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2017/02/14/report-environment-faces-cocktails-of-threats-from-brexit/>

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Plan to scale back wildlife protections and climate change action just a snapshot of absurdity of extreme Brexit, say Greens



9 April 2017

Green Party Animals Spokesperson: 'If the revelations are reliable, they offer just a snapshot of the absurdity at the heart of Theresa May's Brexit.'

The Government's [apparent plan](#) to weaken wildlife protections and 'scale back' Britain's climate ambitions reveals the absurdity of Theresa May's extreme Brexit agenda, according to the Green Party's Animals spokesperson.

Keith Taylor MEP, who is also a member of the European Parliament's Environment Committee and the global Climate Parliament, said:

"If this proves true, it amounts to a promise to sacrifice vital and hard-fought safeguards in a grubby, and plainly desperate, attempt to secure toxic trade deals with nations who have little respect for wildlife or climate change – the most pressing issue we face globally. That the revelations come just days after [India made it clear](#) Theresa May could not rely on Britain's colonial past to expedite trade negotiation is extremely telling. Just over a week on from triggering Article 50 and it would appear the Government is beginning to realise the economic realities of the Prime Minister's extreme Brexit agenda."

"Nobody voted to throw away wildlife safeguards or jettison vital climate ambitions. EU wildlife protections and climate change targets are some of the strongest and most ambitious in the world; proof positive of the value of working with our European Neighbours to tackle cross-border challenges. The best and easiest way of maintaining these regulations post-Brexit is through continued membership of the Single Market. Instead, 'secret documents' reveal the Government wants to 'scale back' our ability to tackle wildlife crime and ignore the urgent need to mitigate the worst effects of climate change – all in a desperate rush to secure damaging free trade deals to compensate for the economic shock of being yanked out of the Single Market. If the revelations are reliable, they offer just a snapshot of the absurdity at the heart of Theresa May's Brexit."

"Greens will continue resisting an extreme Brexit that threatens our precious wildlife and our ability to tackle climate change."

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[Vote Green to protect local services and the environment, co-leader says](#)



7 April 2017

***Party standing record number of candidates**

***Co-leader Jonathan Bartley launches campaign in Worcester**

***Campaign priorities listed in five point pledge**

The Green Party has pledged to protect the environment after Brexit and oppose cuts to local services as it launched its local elections campaign this morning.

Co-leader Jonathan Bartley launched the campaign in Worcester today, where Green councillors hold the balance of power [1]. The party is aiming to attract voters across the country who feel let down by other parties.

Over 90% of people in the UK live within 20km of a site protected under the EU's nature laws [2] and Green councillors will be fighting to protect the local environment after Brexit. The Green Party is campaigning for a new Environmental Protection Act to replace EU legislation [3].

The Green Party will be challenging council cuts at a local level as well as opposing an extreme Brexit. Candidates will be campaigning to stop cuts to essential services and calling for investment in affordable housing, clean transport, healthcare and education. On Worcestershire County Council, the two Green councillors have held the council to account for the building of an environmentally damaging new incinerator and for attempting to reduce bus services.

The party has unveiled a five point pledge for its local elections campaign. Green councillors will fight for:

***Local green spaces**

*Decent social care

*Air fit to breathe

*Affordable homes

*Action on climate change

The Green Party is fielding a record number of candidates in the elections on May 4, with 1,561 standing across England, Scotland and Wales [4].

Bartley said:

“Brexit is an unprecedented threat to the environment and puts 40 years of legislation at risk. These laws protect our air, water and climate and they affect everyone in the UK who values our natural world.

“Our message today is clear: vote Green on May 4 and our councillors will stand up for the environment, whether they are fighting fracking, improving air quality, investing in renewable power and natural flood defences or divesting council pensions from fossil fuels.

“Wherever they are elected, Green councillors make a meaningful difference in their communities, by working with other progressive parties to improve people’s lives and oppose unnecessary cuts to local services. Everyone deserves proper social care and to live in their own home.

“The Green Party is the only party fighting both an extreme Brexit and Tory Government cuts, protecting public services locally while strengthening relationships internationally.”

Notes:

1. Worcester City Council was one of the first to adopt the Living Wage. The two Green councillors also worked with other parties to set aside money in next year’s budget to install solar panels on a council-owned multi-storey car park, generating income as well as operating electric car charging points. They also helped introduce energy efficiency measures at the Grade 1 listed Guild Hall and to plant trees in air pollution hotspots to help reduce health problems.

2. The contributions of the EU nature directives to the CBD and other multilateral environmental agreements. *Conservation Letters*, 9(6), 479-488. Beresford, A. E., Buchanan, G. M., Sanderson, F. J., Jefferson, R., & Donald, P. F. (2016).

3. <https://inews.co.uk/essentials/news/environment/caroline-lucas-accuses-gov-ernment-extraordinary-complacency-brexit/>

4. The Green Party also has candidates in five mayoral elections on May 4. Will Patterson is standing in Greater Manchester, Tom Crone in Liverpool City Region, James Burn in West Midlands, Julie Howell in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough and Darren Hall in West of England. Jess Mayo is contesting the

Manchester Gorton parliamentary by-election.

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