

Green Party: List of employers named and shamed for underpaying workers is just the tip of the iceberg



16 February 2017

The Green Party is appalled by the revelation 360 employers underpaid thousands of workers almost £1 million [1] but believes it is just the tip of the iceberg as the Government process for naming and shaming employers is extremely flawed [2].

The current system means that large, profitable companies are only being named and paying penalties for a small part of all the arrears identified by HMRC [3].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“Employers must be held to account if they fail to pay their workers properly. It might seem like an insignificant amount of money to the businesses but to the individual workers who need it to pay their rent or buy food it has a huge impact. In this age of insecurity everyone deserves to be able to make a living to support themselves and their families.

“It’s absolutely right these employers are being named and shamed but the Government needs to make sure this is not the only action it takes to prevent the exploitation of workers. There is still a lack of transparency in the process as errors that are self-corrected by businesses are not included in the list. It means most of the back payments remain a secret and the public might never find out the true scale of the problem.

“The Green Party believes the introduction of a minimum wage of £10 by 2020 is a necessary step towards tackling inequality and poverty and we have long campaigned for the minimum wage to be raised to the living wage level.”

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-38979368>
2. <https://www.carolinelucas.com/latest/minimum-wage-enforcement-ministers-making-a-mockery-of-%E2%80%98naming-shaming%E2%80%99-scheme>
3. For example, if two workers owed £500 each bring a complaint, HMRC will investigate and decide the employer owes total of £1,000. The employer will be named and shamed for that amount and pay a penalty of £2,000. However, if the employer reveals it actually has 200 workers in the same position and HMRC agrees, HMRC will allow the employer to self-correct in those 200 cases. But the employer does not get named and shamed for this £100,000 error and no penalty is imposed – because the employer self-corrected.

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News story: Alok Sharma marks 45 years of UK-China Ambassadorial ties

In Beijing on Thursday 16 February, Mr Sharma met Chinese Assistant Foreign Ministers Liu Haixing and Kong Xuanyou for wide-ranging political talks to strengthen the global partnership between the UK and China. The Minister emphasised the UK's support for China's Belt and Road Initiative and explored opportunities to develop closer infrastructure and finance partnerships.

The Minister's visit to Beijing follows a three-day tour of south China, leading a delegation of UK healthcare and life science business leaders to Guangzhou, Fuzhou and Xiamen. The delegation showcased world class UK expertise and explored trade and collaboration opportunities across the region.

Speaking at a reception in Beijing, Mr Sharma said:

Throughout the last 45 years, the UK-China relationship has been steadily strengthening. Personal ties and mutual understanding are at the heart of any successful relationship. That is why promoting business, cultural and educational links is so important to us. Forty-five years ago, there were 200 Chinese students in the UK and today we welcome over 150,000 Chinese students at universities, colleges and schools across the UK. Through our Generation UK programme, we are working to increase the number of British students studying in China from 5000 currently to 20,000 by 2020.

As we look ahead to the future for the UK and China, it is important to reflect on what our two countries have achieved over the last 45 years. Trade is clearly a key element of our partnership. In 45 years, trade between our two countries has increased by an incredible 200-fold to CNY 553 billion. We want to do even more. We are also working together to address some of the significant challenges facing the world today, such as conflict in the Middle East and international terrorism. Our Infrastructure Alliance will allow us to work together to build the capacity of third countries, and we are tackling global health issues such as anti-microbial resistance.

An anniversary is always a good moment to reflect on our past achievements. This one is no exception. In the past 45 years since our countries established diplomatic full diplomatic relations, the pace and scope of what we have achieved individually and together is extraordinary.

Further information

Follow Foreign Office Minister Alok Sharma on twitter [@AlokSharma_RDG](#)

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These further cuts will simply apply more pressure on an already overstretched police service – Diane Abbott

Diane

Abbott MP, Labour's Shadow Home Secretary, commenting on Bernard Hogan-Howe's warning on cuts to the Met's Home Office grant, said:

"When the most senior officer in the country warns that the Tories' cuts to the police budgets are dangerous, we should all take note. But ministers arrogantly persist in claiming to have protected spending.

"The substantial reductions to police budgets since 2010 already pose a threat to public safety, now these further cuts will simply apply more pressure on an already overstretched police service.

"Labour will be pushing ministers keep the promise they made and protect police spending."

First Minister announces St David Awards finalists

The St David Awards are the national awards of Wales. They acknowledge the extraordinary achievements of people in or from Wales and recognise the great deeds and contributions made by people from all walks of life.

Announcing the finalists, First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

“The St David Awards, now in their 4th year, are all about celebrating people who have gone the extra mile to make a difference to someone else’s life, overcome adversity or achieved something truly inspirational.

“Once again, the St David Awards finalists are an exceptional group of people. Every single one is a credit to Wales – it is going to be tough to choose the winners! I look forward to celebrating their outstanding achievements at the awards ceremony on 23 March.”

The finalists in the award categories: Bravery; Citizenship; Culture; Enterprise; Innovation, Science and Technology; International; Sport; and Young Person are as follows.

Bravery

Firefighters Gary Slack and Billy Connor. In August 2016, on-call firefighters Gary Slack and Billy Connor braved strong currents at Castle Beach, Tenby, to save 2 children from drowning.

PC Christopher Bluck and PC Rhys Edwards, South Wales Police. In March 2016, police constables Christopher Bluck and Rhys Edwards risked their own safety to save the life of a woman who had set herself on fire and was armed with a handgun.

Pontardawe Fire Crew. In July 2016, the fire crew were called to a house which was on fire with 2 young boys trapped inside. The crew battled dangerous conditions and 800 degree heat to save one of the children, a 3 year old boy, from the fire. The second child was also recovered from the property but tragically died.

Citizenship

Special Constable Cairn Newton-Evans, Dyfed-Powys Police. Having been a victim of a violent homophobic hate crime, Cairn joined the police to try to stop such attacks happening to others. Cairn is a regular volunteer and a passionate advocate for LGBT rights.

21 Plus, Down’s syndrome support charity. Run by 3 mothers who each have

children with Down's syndrome, the charity has gone from strength to strength over the past 10 years.

Anthony Evans, education campaigner for disabled students. Spurred on while looking to further improve his severely disabled son's education, Anthony has campaigned for post-19 education for severely disabled adults. Thanks to Anthony's efforts, a day college for disabled young adults in Wales was established in September 2016.

Culture

Elfed Roberts, Chief Executive of the National Eisteddfod. Having been at the festival's helm for nearly 25 years, Elfed has ensured the Eisteddfod continues to grow and develop, while remaining contemporary and welcoming to all.

Professor Jen Wilson, jazz musician and archivist. For more than 50 years, Jen has played a central role in promoting jazz music in Wales and in documenting its history and social impact – and in particular the role of women in jazz.

The Cory Band. Established in Treorchy in 1884, the brass band has a reputation for excellence. They made history in 2016 by becoming the first band to be quadruple champions; simultaneously holding the National, Open, European and Brass in Concert titles.

Enterprise

Llaeth y Llan – The Village Dairy, yogurt producers. A family run business, developed through diversification of a farm in Conwy, Llaeth y Llan produces yogurts sold across Wales and the UK. They believe their business is only as good as their 43 staff and put an emphasis on training and investing in the community.

David Banner, video games director. As well as being a multi-award winning games director and managing director of Wales Interactive, Dai has been instrumental in the growth of Wales' games industry. He founded the annual Wales Games Show in 2012 and created the GamesLab project, a digital development initiative for the University of South Wales, which has nurtured hundreds of students and provides a global platform for Welsh digital companies.

Halen Môn – Anglesey Sea Salt. Owners Alison and David Lea-Wilson have succeeded in starting a sustainable, successful business which employs local people with environmental and educational principles whilst also attracting tourists to Anglesey.

Innovation, Science and Technology

Jessica Leigh Jones, astrophysicist and engineer. The astrophysics graduate and former UK Young Engineer of the Year received the Intel Inspiration Award for Entrepreneurship for developing a series of novel fibre optic

transducers. An advocate for technical sciences, she is also director of the Engineering Education Scheme Wales and patron of Science and Engineering at Alton Convent School.

Professor Meena Upadhyaya OBE, geneticist. Britain's first female British-Indian professor in medical genetics within the UK, Meena's career focused on identifying genetic disorders. Meena has made a difference to people's lives either through her medical research or community and charity work and received an OBE in 2016 for services to medical genetics and the Welsh Asian community.

Genesis Biosciences. In a market dominated by harsh and sometimes dangerous chemical cleaners, Genesis develops products that put customers' safety and the environment first. This approach has been recognised through a number of industry awards, including the EDIE Sustainability Leaders Awards 2015 and the Technology and Innovation Business of the Year category at the 2015 Cardiff Business Awards.

International

Dr David Nott OBE, warzone surgeon. Each year, for the past 23 years, David has taken unpaid leave from his job as consultant surgeon at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital to work for aid agencies and provide surgical treatment to the victims of conflict and catastrophe. David and his wife, Elly, have also established the David Nott Foundation, raising hundreds of thousands of pounds for charity and providing surgical training to front line medics.

Nizar Dahan, international volunteer. Nizar works for the Human Relief Foundation and is nominated for his extensive international humanitarian work in response to the refugee crisis and for establishing the Swansea Humanitarian Aid Response Project, which supports displaced and vulnerable people.

Professor Carl G. Jones MBE, conservation biologist. Professor Jones has dedicated his life to restoring endangered animal populations and habitats, and is regarded as one of the most accomplished conservationists on earth. He is responsible for saving from extinction the Mauritius kestrel, 3 species of reptiles, a fruit bat and several plants.

Sport

Wales International Football Squad, UEFA Euro 2016. The Wales National football team, led by Chris Coleman, reached the semi-final of the Euros 2016. The squad were first class ambassadors for Wales, both on and off the pitch, and their strapline of "Together Stronger" has inspired the nation and captured worldwide interest.

The Welsh Members of TeamGB Olympics and Paralympic, Rio 2016. The 24 Welsh athletes selected by TeamGB was the largest ever overseas contingent of Welsh athletes at an Olympic Games, while the 26 Welsh Paralympics athletes accounted for 10% of the Great Britain team. 2016 was a very successful year for the Welsh athletes, while they also represented the country with dignity

and courage.

Anne Ellis OBE, Sport Ambassador. In July 2016, Anne Ellis stepped down as President of Hockey Wales, after 20 years at the helm. During the past 2 decades, Welsh Hockey has seen significant changes and Anne has been involved in it all.

Young Person

Brittany Davies, volunteer for looked after children. Brittany became looked after at the age of 16 and, despite many significant and harrowing challenges, she is now studying for her A Levels and volunteers regularly to help others in similar situations.

Savannah Lloyd, mental health volunteer. Having battled mental health problems since she was 11 years old, Savannah uses her experiences to reach out and help others in similar situations.

Elan Môn Gilford, sport volunteer. Despite 18 year old Elan's hearing loss, she volunteers 8 to 10 hours a week to coach sport sessions, children's karate and netball. Elan also runs a community sign language course.

[News story: UK urges Coalition to maintain momentum against Daesh](#)

With Daesh losing in both Iraq and Syria, Ministers considered the Coalition campaign plan for 2017. This included plans for the operation to liberate Western Mosul, which the Defence Secretary reviewed with the Iraqi Prime Minister and Defence Minister during his visit to Iraq last weekend. With eastern Mosul recently liberated by Iraqi forces, operations to free the west of the city from Daesh's tyranny will start shortly.

The RAF has been in action, striking Daesh around the approaches to the city in recent weeks ahead of the launch of the operation, including sinking a Daesh heavy machine gun team last week on a boat on the River Tigris. On Tuesday careful surveillance operations allowed a building on the north-western outskirts of Mosul to be identified as a Daesh headquarters. With Iraqi forces keeping close watch from across the Tigris, a flight of Typhoons were able to conduct a highly accurate attack late at night – two Paveway IVs demolished the target.

[RAF Typhoons bomb a Daesh HQ](#)

RAF fast jets and remotely piloted aircraft have now carried out over 1,200 airstrikes against Daesh, second only to the United States in numbers of Coalition strikes.

In Syria, where the picture is more complicated, the Defence Secretary confirmed that by spring the operation to isolate Raqqa, the last major city Daesh holds in Syria, would be complete. It is expected that thereafter the liberation of the city itself will begin.

As the fight against Daesh enters a new phase, Ministers reviewed Coalition requests to make the training effort more flexible. The Defence Secretary last month authorised UK personnel to deliver training at secured and protected locations in Iraq, in addition to the training sites at Taji, Al Asad, Besmayah and Irbil, where personnel are already deployed. By training forward Britain will now deliver the infantry skills, counter-IED, combat first aid and bridge-building training where Iraqi forces need it. British forces previously mentored Iraqi forces carrying out bridge building ahead of the liberation of eastern Mosul.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

Daesh is losing ground, fighters, and funding. Now we need to keep up the pressure on Mosul and Raqqa to deal Daesh a decisive blow. Britain will continue playing its leading role providing vital intelligence, precision airstrikes, and training Iraqi forces where they need it.

The meeting of Coalition Defence Ministers took place following discussions the day before on what more NATO would do to protect its southern borders. Sir Michael confirmed that Britain will send a UK military officer to help lead NATO's newly established training and capacity building mission in Iraq. This effort will help Iraqis defeat Daesh with training including in countering explosive devices. This commitment builds on the work that Britain is already doing in the country, where, we are helping to train Iraqi forces at an unprecedented level, with over 3,000 being trained a month.

Read more about UK activity against Daesh [here](#)