

Green Party backs charities calls to restore nature



Green Party

15 April 2024

Green Party co-leader, Adrian Ramsay, has announced the Party's plans for an Independent Commission for Nature that would protect nature and ensure the restoration of wildlife habitats. The new watchdog would be created as part of a new "Rights of Nature" Act that would enshrine in law the intrinsic value of nature while also recognising how a healthy natural environment is fundamental to clear air, water and food.

Ramsay made the announcement as he joined leaders of national conservation charities at Black Bourn Valley Reserve in Suffolk [1] where they delivered their 'Nature 2030 Open Letter' signed by 100,000 people across the country [2].

Adrian Ramsay said:

"I am delighted to be the first party leader to back the calls of conservation groups to restore nature. The natural environment is deeply important to the British people, yet the lack of adequate legal protection has left the UK as one of the most nature depleted countries in the world. Last year's State of Nature report [3] highlighted the scale of the threats facing nature, with 1 in 6 species at risk of extinction. Given this alarming situation, the work of the country's many conservation and wildlife organisations is critical in helping to protect and restore nature. Like them, the Green Party understands we need a change in government policies to ensure the UK meets legally binding targets for nature by 2030.

"Greens believe that nature has an intrinsic value. It is also vital to human health and survival – for the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat. Evidence also shows that people's physical and mental wellbeing is enhanced by easy access to green spaces and nature.

"The Green Party wants to see much greater protection of nature in law. We would set up an Independent Commission for Nature that would set targets for nature protection and restoration, enforced through the courts. This would be groundbreaking, allowing for the first time the possibility of individuals, communities and conservation groups taking legal action on behalf of nature.

Currently, every time our rivers, seas or land is polluted, prosecution is left to hopelessly underfunded quangos.

“The Nature 2030 open letter, signed by over 100,000 people, demonstrates that people want to see firm action to halt and reverse the decline of nature by 2030. The Green Party fully backs the outcomes the Nature 2030 coalition of conservation organisations want to see [4]. Nature restoration will be a key priority in our general election manifesto, and for me personally if I’m elected as an MP.

“Only the Green Party will take the necessary action to double the budget for nature friendly farming, protect 30% of the land and sea for nature, invest in the skills needed for regenerative farming and wildlife habitat restoration, and protect people’s right to clean air and water and access to nature.”

Notes

1. [Black Bourn Valley Nature Reserve managed by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust](#) is a 290 acre former arable farm where natural regeneration methods and conservation grazing are being used to demonstrate how land management can balance competing demands on land use and natural resources whilst bringing back nature.
2. [Open Letter Nature 2030 Campaign.pdf](#)
3. [State of Nature 2023 – report on the UK’s current biodiversity](#)
4. [Nature 2030 Report 18.07.2023.pdf \(wcl.org.uk\)](#)

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[Green Party response to the Iranian attack on Israel](#)



Green Party

14 April 2024

Following news of the Iranian attack on Israel and the involvement of UK aircraft in Israel's defence, Green Party co-leader, Carla Denyer, has urged the UK not to be dragged into a Middle East war. She said:

"The Green Party condemns Iran's attacks against Israel, which were targeted on civilian as well as military targets. This represents a concerning escalation of the current conflict in the Middle East. We call on all parties now to find ways to de-escalate this conflict, which risks spreading across the region.

"We are concerned by the use of British aircraft in the night's events. We question why Britain should be involved in this confrontation, where there is a risk that we could become embroiled in a regional war. The record of Afghanistan and Iraq suggests that involvement in such conflict brings great risks, especially when the military and strategic objectives are unclear."

Denyer also questioned at what level the decision to engage UK defence forces was made:

"I am deeply concerned about how this decision to deepen our involvement was made and in what further action the government proposes to involve UK armed forces. Britain's military involvement must be scrutinised and debated by parliament. We should not allow ourselves to be dragged into a Middle East war.

"Last night's violence demonstrates again that there must be resolution to the interconnected conflicts of the Middle East, including in Gaza where a ceasefire remains urgent. We are at a moment of grave peril and it is incumbent on all countries, including the UK, to find ways to reduce rather than contribute to conflict."

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Reaction to Wes Streeting comments on NHS reform and private sector involvement



Green Party

8 April 2024

Responding to comments by the Shadow Health Secretary saying that under a Labour government investment in the NHS would be dependent on reform and that there would be an increased role for the private sector [1], co-leader of the Green Party, Carla Denyer, said:

“Wes Streeting says that if the NHS doesn’t change, it will die. But it is inadequate funding that has left our NHS in a poor state of health, not lack of reform.

“Between 2010 and 2019 the UK had a lower level of capital investment in health care and 18% lower average health spending than 14 EU countries [2].

“So to say that the public is paying a heavy price for failure is an insult to hard-working NHS staff, who are doing their level best despite being overworked and underpaid. It is the failure to invest adequately and pay staff properly that is at the root of dissatisfaction with the NHS.

“The public agrees. They don’t want endless reforms; neither do they share the Conservative or Labour appetite for creeping privatisation. They want the current model to work and to see the NHS available to everyone free of charge and primarily funded through taxes [3]. A tax on the super-rich billionaires and multi-millionaires can provide the funds needed to fix our cherished NHS.

“The Green Party has never had any truck with the profit motive in health care and will continue to push for a fully publicly funded NHS.”

Notes

[1] [Wes Streeting warns NHS that there’ll be no additional funding without ‘major surgery’ under Labour | The Sun](#)

[2] [How does UK health spending compare across Europe over the past decade? –](#)

[Greens call for end to violence in Gaza six months since October 7th attack](#)



Green Party

7 April 2024

The Green Party has repeated its call for a full bilateral ceasefire, the release of all hostages, the suspension of arms exports to Israel, and for key players in the Netanyahu government to be held accountable for possible war crimes, six months on from the 7 October attacks by Hamas.

Co-leader of the Green Party, Carla Denyer, said:

“This isn’t just a far away conflict that we have nothing to do with. By consistently refusing to call for a ceasefire and continuing to supply arms, the UK Government has been complicit in the deadly assault on Gaza by the Israel Defence Forces.

“Six months on from the horrific Hamas attacks on Israeli citizens, it is clear that the Netanyahu government’s response has been totally disproportionate. Over 33,000 innocent Palestinian civilians have now been killed, the majority of them women and children. This is not an act of self defence. As the UN’s Human Rights Council has resolved, the actions by the Israeli government are possible war crimes and crimes against humanity. Indeed, the UK Government itself has reportedly concluded secretly that Israel is breaking international humanitarian law.

“It is time for our Government to end their complicity and start leading efforts towards peace. They must finally call for a ceasefire, immediately

suspend arms exports to Israel and back the UN Human Rights Council's call for accountability for all violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law."

In the six months since October 7th, the Green Party of England and Wales has called for:

- A full bilateral ceasefire
- The release of all hostages
- A suspension of all arms export licences to Israel until the violence stops
- The cessation of all military collaboration with Israel, including use of British bases by Israeli forces, and intelligence sharing
- Targeted Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against individuals and institutions supporting or facilitating Israel's occupation of Palestine
- An investigation by the Metropolitan Police and Director of Public Prosecutions of war crimes committed against UK citizens, or where UK citizens are potential perpetrators
- The UK government to use its position as a permanent member of the UN Security Council to vote for, rather than abstain on, ceasefire votes
- Targeted sanctions against key individuals in the Israeli leadership, including travel bans and asset freezes on Israel's government ministers
- An end to occupation of the Palestinian territories
- The UK government to return to international law being the benchmark for UK policy, and repair the UK's international reputation as a defender of the international rules-based order.

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**Green Party local election launch:
time to unlock policies that will
create hundreds of thousands of
affordable homes**



Green Party

4 April 2024

The Green Party of England and Wales launches its local election campaign in Bristol today with a pledge to support councils to massively increase their supply of affordable housing.

Co-leader Carla Denyer, who is standing as MP candidate in Bristol Central, said:

“This country faces an acute housing crisis. There are over a million households on council waiting lists [1]. In England the average home for sale now costs more than 8 times the annual average household earnings [2].

“We desperately need a massive increase in the supply of affordable social housing. I hear regularly from people who have been living in unacceptable conditions, crying out for a secure home or struggling to make ends meet because their rents are through the roof.

“Councils have a vital role to play but they need a framework that supports them to provide the homes that people desperately need. We need to unlock the policies that will make hundreds of thousands of extra council homes available – for good. We also need a fair deal for the millions of people renting in the private sector.”

The policies the Green Party would introduce to help councils increase the supply of affordable housing include:

- Providing funding to councils to meet their needs for affordable social housing and lift the overly restrictive rules on council borrowing for housebuilding – ensuring at least an extra 150,000 council homes a year are made available through a mix of new build, refurbishment, conversions and buying up existing homes
- Ending Right to Buy, enabling local authorities to keep council homes available and affordable in the community for good
- Taming the private rental market through rent controls, in places where the rental market is overheated, to ensure a fair rent, as well as ending no-fault evictions.
- Creating a ‘community right to buy’, giving councils, housing associations and community housing groups first refusal to buy certain properties that come onto the market, including former social housing bought under Right to Buy; properties in need of energy efficiency improvements; or any property left empty for an unacceptably long time.

Co-leader Adrian Ramsay, who is standing as parliamentary candidate for Waveney Valley – the area where Greens won a majority on Mid Suffolk District Council last year, added:

“Whilst our housing crisis is one of supply, it is also a crisis of housing quality, and homes too often being built with a view to developers’ profits rather than community needs.

“That’s why our Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price charter [3] would

transform the planning system to ensure all new homes are built to the highest environmental standards, prioritising brownfield sites, while requiring all new developments come with investment in local services, such as extra school and GP places, better bus services and infrastructure for walking and cycling. [1]

Deputy leader and Green London Assembly member, Zack Polanski, said:

“London is far too expensive for so many including our key workers in the NHS, hospitality and other areas. The Green Party want to see a ‘Living Rent’, where median local rents would take up no more than 35% of the local median take-home pay. The fact that this is so commonly exceeded is forcing people into fuel or food poverty. This is a scandal.

“Greens demand rent control powers for London and a two-year rent freeze when we get them. We will also set up a Rent Commission to look at bringing down private rents.”

The Green Party will launch its local election campaign in Bristol [4]. Co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“The Green Party has built up a head of steam in Bristol. We are aiming for a record number of seats in the city and believe we could emerge as the largest party and leading the next administration. We go into these local elections with around 760 councillors on nearly 170 Councils in both urban and rural settings, and Greens already a governing party in 10% of all councils in England and Wales.”

Notes

1. [14,000 social homes lost last year, as over a million households sit on waiting lists – Shelter England](#)
2. [Home buyers in England face paying 8.7 times annual earnings: ONS – Mortgage Strategy](#)
3. [Greens call for Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter to beat housing crisis and protect green space | The Green Party](#)
4. The local election launch will take place on Thursday 4 April at the [Engineers House Conference Centre](#) at 11am. The co-leaders of the Green Party, Carla Denyer and Adrian Ramsay will launch the campaign and be available for photos and interviews. Deputy leader Zack Polanski will also be available.

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