

[Jonathan Ashworth responds to Government's new ambulance service standards announcement](#)

Jonathan Ashworth, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, commenting on the Government's announcement of new ambulance service standards, said:

"This Government have failed to hit any of their main NHS ambulance targets since May 2015 and an updated system that truly works for patients is clearly overdue. NHS ambulance trusts must now be given every support to build a new system which has the support of paramedics and patients alike.

"The truth is that the Tories' underfunding and mismanagement of the NHS has pushed ambulance services to the brink and left record numbers of patients suffering and in discomfort. The public will want to know that a new series of standards is truly based on the best clinical evidence and not just on the money which the Government are making available.

"Sir Bruce Keogh has shown great leadership in demanding the best for NHS patients. The Government must now match these ambitions and give ambulance trusts the support and resources they need to deliver the best possible quality of care for ill and injured patients."

[Green Party: Right to protest under threat in Lancashire](#)



Green Party

13 July 2017

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, has written to the CEO of fracking company Cuadrilla to demand answers over allegations security staff

punched an activist and pinned him down by the throat.

Bartley visited the Preston New Road fracking site today (Thursday 13 July) to meet anti-fracking campaigners and hand deliver the letter to Francis Egan, Cuadrilla chief executive. Joining Bartley on the visit was indigenous leader and Standing Rock activist from the US, William Hawk Birdshead.

Police in Lancashire are [investigating reports of assault](#) by a security guard at the site, with protestors also making complaints about heavy handed police. Pictures show activist Robbie Gillett being pinned to the floor by his throat by security guards.

The letter [full text below] asks Egan to confirm:

1. If he is aware of the allegations;
2. What actions he will be taking to investigate them;
3. What actions he will take against the security guard(s) and staff in question if these allegations are substantiated;
4. What existing processes he has in place to ensure that all staff contracted through external companies conduct themselves safely and appropriately;
5. What steps will be taken to ensure such violence does not take place in the future.

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

“The reports coming from Cuadrilla’s fracking site in Lancashire are of grave concern. Protestors being driven into with a van, punched in the face, held by the throat – and all by workers employed on the site.

“Cuadrilla must respond to these serious allegations immediately. Protest is a pillar of our free society and democracy. Cuadrilla must make clear what it is doing to investigate and ensure violence is never used against anyone at its site.”

Robbie Gillett, anti-fracking activist, said:

“Cuadrilla’s staff were in no way justified in punching me in the face whilst already restraining me on the floor of a public highway, nor in strangling me as the photos show. That amounts to common assault. This was a violent, disproportionate and unlawful use of force which is a typical of an industry that has no social licence to operate.”

Ellen Gibson, a spokesperson [from Reclaim the Power](#) who was present at the site and witnessed the action, said:

“Today’s brutality by Cuadrilla’s security team represents a totally disproportionate, violent and unnecessary response to the ongoing peaceful protests at Preston New Road. Particularly concerning were the actions of the Head of Security, who punched and throttled a man.

“While security guards may be allowed to use ‘reasonable force’ to eject someone from private property; punching demonstrators in the face whilst

pinning them to the ground on a public road amounts to assault.

“This violent behaviour from Cuadrilla’s staff against community members and supporters cannot be left unchallenged – the Police must act to guarantee the safety and right to peaceful protest of all people present at Preston New Road. What little credibility Cuadrilla had in the local community and across the UK has been demolished after today’s actions by their staff.”

Notes:

1. Full text of the letter to Cuadrilla:

The Green Party
The Biscuit Factory
A Block (201)
100 Clements Rd
London
SE16 4DG

Francis Egan

Cuadrilla Resources Ltd

Cuadrilla House, Unit 6 Sceptre Court

Sceptre Way, Bamber Bridge

Preston

PR5 6AW

12/7/2017

Dear Mr. Egan

I’m writing to you about the ongoing protests taking place at your fracking site in Lancashire.

I’ve been extremely concerned by a number of eyewitness testimonies from people at the protest, regarding the behaviour of your contracted security guards and staff. There have been reports of hostility and even violence.

Last week, I was troubled by an image (enclosed) of a protester being held down by the throat, and numerous eyewitnesses testimonies that the protester was punched in the face by the same security guard, shortly after the photograph was taken. The individual has suffered significant facial injuries consistent with the descriptions of violence we have received.

Further to this incident, I was shocked to see footage earlier this week of

what appeared to be a member of Cuadrilla staff hitting a peaceful protester with a moving van at some speed, and continuing to drive away. Eyewitness allegations claim that this appeared to be deliberate.

If these testimonies are correct then these would appear to be cases of very serious assault.

Please could you tell me:

1. If you are aware of the allegations;
2. What actions you will be taking to investigate them;
3. What actions you will take against the security guard(s) and staff in question if these allegations are substantiated;
4. What existing processes you have in place to ensure that all staff contracted through external companies conduct themselves safely and appropriately;
5. What steps will be taken to ensure such violence does not take place in the future.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Bartley

Co-leader of the Green Party of England and Wales

[Tweet](#)

[Back to main news page](#)

[Let's block ads! \(Why?\)](#)

[China to curb student obesity](#)



People do exercise at a gym. [File Photo]

China plans to slow the growing rate of obesity among its citizens, especially students, according to a national nutrition plan released Thursday.

The national nutrition plan for 2017 to 2030, was published by the general office of the State Council, China's cabinet, to improve the country's health condition.

It paid special attention to various at risk groups, including students, patients, pregnant women, infants, and the elderly.

According to the plan, the growing rate of obesity among Chinese students needs to be slowed down by 2020, and to be under "effective" control by 2030, and the rate of overweight and obese Chinese needs to drop significantly by 2030.

Thirty percent of Chinese adults are overweight, and 11.9 percent are obese, the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention said in May.

Among Chinese children aged six to 17, 9.6 percent are overweight and 6.4 percent are obese.

The plan urged the schools nationwide to structure meal plans based on the age of students and the school's location, and to launch an educational campaign on nutrition to students.

It also called for schools to add more sport activities into the curriculum.

Other than the state of obesity in developed area of the country, the plan highlighted the need to take care of malnourished people as well.

It required local governments and schools in poorer areas to improve the nutritional content of meal plans and monitor food safety more strictly.

Local authorities in underdeveloped areas should strengthen the supervision and prevention of foodborne illnesses, according to the plan.

It also proposed the combination of traditional Chinese medicine with Western nutrition and physical training to better serve the people.

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



Green Party

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>

[Tweet](#)

[Back to main news page](#)

[Let's block ads! \(Why?\)](#)

[Thai-born giant panda Lin Bing gives birth to twins](#)

Lin Bing, a giant panda born in Thailand and returned to China in 2013, gave birth to twins last week, the Chinese Giant Panda Protection and Research Center announced Thursday.

The cubs arrived about seven hours apart last Saturday. The female cub, weighing 170 grams, was born at 8:17 a.m.; her brother, weighing 159 grams, arrived at 3:08 p.m.

Both of the cubs and their mother are in a healthy condition.

According to base staff, Lin Bing had mated with two male pandas before showing signs of pregnancy. The father of the cubs has yet to be confirmed.

The twins are the first pandas born at Sichuan's Shenshuping protection base in the reconstructed Wolong National Nature Reserve after the habitat were severely damaged in the 2008 Sichuan earthquake.

The earthquake left one panda dead and another missing.

Born in May 2009, Lin Bing is the daughter of giant panda couple "Lin Hui" and "Chuang Chuang".

As the first giant panda born in Thailand, Lin Bing has become one of the most popular animals in the country. In 2015, she also gave birth to twins.